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SAM.L JOHNSON, LL.D.

THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

WITH

MURPHY'S ESSAY.

EDITED

BY THE REV. ROBERT LYNAM, A.M.

ASSISTANT CHAPLAIN TO THE MAGDALEN HOSPITAL.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

The Works of Dr. Johnson are so established in the public opinion, that they need no recommendation to introduce them to notice, and no long encomium to explain their merits, and procure for them a due share of admiration. In an ample variety of subjects, in criticism and philology, in biography and ethics, he has written with a vigour of thought and majesty of style, which have gained him admirers among all, who are able to value either the sentiments or the language of an author. His depth of reflection satisfies the most acute and penetrating reader; and at the same time the pomp and harmony of his language give pleasure to the most critical ear, and the most refined taste. The panegyric which Pliny bestowed upon one of his contemporaries, conveys no exaggerated flattery when applied to Dr. Johnson. *Nihil est illo gravius, sanctius, doctius; ut mihi non unus homo, sed literæ ipsæ omnesque bonæ artes in uno homine summum periculum adire videantur—Quantum rerum, quantum exemplorum tenet? Nihil est quod discere velis, quod ille docere non possit.**

* Lib. I. Epist. Catilio Severo.

The present impression is comprised in Six Volumes: but though thus conveniently reduced in bulk, it contains all the productions of the Author that have been ever inserted in the largest and most complete editions: and even a greater specimen of his Sermons, than it has been hitherto customary to present to the public. The Latin and Greek quotations have been carefully revised: the notes also of the best editors and commentators preserved, and some few original ones added. The edition, therefore, is as complete as the exactest care can make it, nothing being omitted that can gratify the admirers of the great and incomparable JOHNSON.

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AN

ESSAY ON THE LIFE AND GENIUS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

When the works of a great Writer, who has bequeathed to posterity a lasting legacy, are presented to the world, it is naturally expected that some account of his life should accompany the edition. The Reader wishes to know as much as possible of the Author. The circumstances that attended him, the features of his private character, his conversation, and the means by which he rose to eminence, become the favourite objects of inquiry. Curiosity is excited; and the admirer of his works is eager to know his private opinions, his course of study, the particularities of his conduct, and, above all, whether he pursued the wisdom which he recommends, and practised the virtue which his writings inspire. A principle of gratitude is awakened in every generous mind. For the entertainment and instruction which genius and diligence have provided for the world, men of refined and sensible tempers are ready to pay their tribute of praise, and even to form a posthumous friendship with the author.

In reviewing the life of such a writer, there is, besides, a rule of justice to which the public have an undoubted claim. Fond admiration and partial friendship should not be suffered to represent his virtues with exaggeration; nor should malignity be allowed, under a specious disguise, to magnify mere defects, the usual failings of human nature, into vice or gross deformity. The lights and shades

of the character should be given; and if this be done a strict regard to truth, a just estimate of Dr. John will afford a lesson perhaps as valuable as the moral doctrine that speaks with energy in every page of his works.

The present writer enjoyed the conversation and friendship of that excellent man more than thirty years. He thought it an honour to be so connected, and to this hou he reflects on his loss with regret: but regret, he knows, has secret bribes, by which the judgment may be influenced, and partial affection may be carried beyond the bounds of truth. In the present case, however, nothing needs to be disguised, and exaggerated praise is unnecessary. It is an observation of the younger Pliny, in his Epistle to his friend Tacitus, that history ought never to magnify matters of fact, because worthy actions require nothing but the truth. *Nam nec historia debet egredi veritatem, et honestè factis veritas sufficit.* This rule the esent biographer promises shall guide his pen throughout the following narrative.

It may be said, the death of Dr. Johnson kept the public mind in agitation beyond all former example. No literary character ever excited so much attention; and, when the press has teemed with anecdotes, apophthegms, essays, and publications of every kind, what occasion now for a new tract on the same threadbare subject? The plain truth shall be the answer. The proprietors of Johnson's Works thought the life, which they prefixed to their former edition, too unwieldy for republication. The prodi- is variety of foreign matter, introduced into that performance, seemed to overload the memory of Dr. Johnson, and in the account of his own life to leave him hardly visible. They wished to have a more concise, and, for that reason, perhaps, a more satisfactory account, such as y exhibit a just picture of the man, and keep him the principal figure in the fore-ground of his own picture. To comply with that request is the design of this essay, which the writer undertakes with a trembling hand. He has no discoveries, no secret anecdotes, no occasional con-

troversy, no sudden flashes of wit and humour, no private conversation, and no new facts, to embellish his work. Every thing has been gleaned. Dr. Johnson said of himself, "I am not uncandid, nor severe: I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest, and people are apt to think me serious."* The exercise of that privilege, which is enjoyed by every man in society, has not been allowed to him. His fame has given importance even to trifles; and the zeal of his friends has brought every thing to light. What should be related, and what should not, has been published without distinction. *Dicenda tacenda locuti:* Every thing that fell from him has been caught with eagerness by his admirers, who, as he says in one of his letters, have acted with the diligence of spies upon his conduct. To some of them the following lines, in Mallet's Poem on Verbal Criticism, are not inapplicable:

> "Such that grave bird in Northern seas is found,
> Whose name a Dutchman only knows to sound;
> Where-e'er the king of fish moves on before,
> This humble friend attends from shore to shore;
> With eye still earnest, and with bill inclined,
> He picks up what his patron drops behind,
> With those choice cates his palate to regale,
> And is the careful TIBBALD of A WHALE."

After so many essays and volumes of *Johnsoniana*, what remains for the present writer? Perhaps, what has not been attempted; a short, yet full, a faithful, yet temperate, history of Dr. Johnson.

SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Lichfield, September 7, 1709, O. S.† His father, Michael Johnson, was a bookseller in that city; a man of large athletic make, and violent passions; wrong-headed, positive, and at times afflicted with a degree of melancholy, little short of madness. His mother was sister to Dr. Ford, a practising physician, and father of Cornelius Ford, generally known by the name of PARSON FORD, the same who is repre-

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. ii. p. 465, 4to. edit.

† This appears in a note to Johnson's Diary, prefixed to the first of his prayers. After the alteration of the style, he kept his birth-day on the 18th of September, and it is accordingly marked September $\frac{7}{18}$.

sented near the punch-bowl in Hogarth's Midnight Modern Conversation. In the Life of Fenton, Johnson says, that " his abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise." Being chaplain to the Earl of Chesterfield, he wished to attend that nobleman on his embassy to the Hague. Colley Cibber has recorded the anecdote. " You should go," said the witty peer, " if to your many vices you would add one more." " Pray, my lord, what is that?" " Hypocrisy, my dear Doctor." Johnson had a younger brother named Nathaniel, who died at the age of twenty-seven or twenty-eight. Michael Johnson, the father, was chosen in the year 1718 Under Bailiff of Lichfield; and in the year 1725 he served the office of the Senior Bailiff. He had a brother of the name of Andrew, who, for some years, kept the ring at Smithfield, appropriated to wrestlers and boxers. Our author used to say, that he was never thrown or conquered. Michael, the father, died December 1731, at the age of seventy-six: his mother at eighty-nine, of a gradual decay, in the year 1759. Of the family nothing more can be related worthy of notice. Johnson did not delight in talking of his relations. " There is little pleasure," he said to Mrs. Piozzi, " in relating the anecdotes of beggary."

Johnson derived from his parents, or from an unwholesome nurse, the distemper called the King's Evil. The Jacobites at that time believed in the efficacy of the royal touch, and accordingly Mrs. Johnson presented her son, when two years old, before Queen Anne, who, for the first time, performed that office, and communicated to her young patient all the healing virtue in her power. He was afterwards cut for that scrophulous humour, and the under part of his face was seamed and disfigured by the operation. It is supposed, that this disease deprived him of the sight of his left eye, and also impaired his hearing. At eight years old, he was placed under Mr. Hawkins, at the Free-school at Lichfield, where he was not remarkable

for diligence or regular application. Whatever he read, his tenacious memory made his own. In the fields with his school-fellows he talked more to himself than with his companions. In 1725, when he was about sixteen years old, he went on a visit to his cousin Cornelius Ford, who detained him for some months, and in the mean time assisted him in the classics. The general direction for his studies, which he then received, he related to Mrs. Piozzi. "Obtain," says Ford, "some general principles of every science: he who can talk only on one subject, or act only in one department, is seldom wanted, and perhaps, never wished for; while the man of general knowledge can often benefit, and always please." The advice Johnson seems to have pursued with a good inclination. His reading was always desultory, seldom resting on any particular author, but rambling from one book to another, and, by hasty snatches, hoarding up a variety of knowledge. It may be proper in this place to mention another general rule laid down by Ford for Johnson's future conduct: "You will make your way the more easily in the world, as you are contented to dispute no man's claim to conversation-excellence: they will, therefore, more willingly allow your pretensions as a writer." "But," says Mrs. Piozzi, "the features of peculiarity, which mark a character to all succeeding generations, are slow in coming to their growth." That ingenious lady adds, with her usual vivacity, "Can one, on such an occasion, forbear recollecting the predictions of Boileau's father, who said, stroking the head of the young satirist, 'This little man has too much wit, but he will never speak ill of any one.'"

On Johnson's return from Cornelius Ford, Mr. Hunter, then master of the Free-school at Lichfield, refused to receive him again on that foundation. At this distance of time, what his reasons were, it is vain to inquire; but to refuse assistance to a lad of promising genius must be pronounced harsh and illiberal. It did not, however, stop the progress of the young student's education. He was placed at another school, at Stourbridge in Worces-

tershire, under the care of Mr. Wentworth. Having gone through the rudiments of classic literature, he returned to his father's house, and was probably intended for the trade of a bookseller. He has been heard to say that he could bind a book. At the end of two years, being then about nineteen, he went to assist the studies of a young gentleman, of the name of Corbet, to the University of Oxford; and on the 31st of October, 1728, both were entered of Pembroke College; Corbet as a gentleman-commoner, and Johnson as a commoner. The college tutor, Mr. Jordan, was a man of no genius; and Johnson, it seems, shewed an early contempt of mean abilities, in one or two instances behaving with insolence to that gentleman. Of his general conduct at the university there are no particulars that merit attention, except the translation of Pope's Messiah, which was a college exercise imposed upon him as a task by Mr. Jordan. Corbet left the university in about two years, and Johnson's salary ceased. He was, by consequence, straitened in his circumstances; but he still remained at college. Mr. Jordan, the tutor, went off to a living; and was succeeded by Dr. Adams, who afterwards became head of the college, and was esteemed through life for his learning, his talents, and his amiable character. Johnson grew more regular in his attendance. Ethics, theology, and classic literature, were his favourite studies. He discovered, notwithstanding, early symptoms of that wandering disposition of mind which adhered to him to the end of his life. His reading was by fits and starts, undirected to any particular science. General philology, agreeably to his cousin Ford's advice, was the object of his ambition. He received, at that time, an early impression of piety, and a taste for the best authors, ancient and modern. It may, notwithstanding, be questioned whether except his Bible, he ever read a book entirely through. Late in life, if any man praised a book in his presence, he was sure to ask, "Did you read it through?" If the answer was in the affirmative, he did not seem willing to believe it. He continued at the university till the

want of pecuniary supplies obliged him to quit the place. He obtained, however, the assistance of a friend, and returning in a short time was able to complete a residence of three years. The history of his exploits at Oxford, he used to say, was best known to Dr. Taylor and Dr. Adams. Wonders are told of his memory, and, indeed, all who knew him late in life can witness that he retained that faculty in the greatest vigour.

From the university Johnson returned to Lichfield. His father died soon after, December 1731; and the whole receipt out of his effects, as appeared by a memorandum in the son's hand-writing, dated 15th June, 1732, was no more than twenty pounds.* In this exigence, determined that poverty should neither depress his spirits nor warp his integrity, he became under-master of a grammar-school at Market Bosworth, in Leicestershire. That resource, however, did not last long. Disgusted by the pride of Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of that little seminary, he left the place in discontent, and ever after spoke of it with abhorrence. In 1733 he went on a visit to Mr. Hector, who had been his school-fellow, and was then a surgeon at Birmingham, lodging at the house of Warren, a bookseller. At that place Johnson translated a Voyage to Abyssinia, written by Jerome Lobo, a Portuguese missionary. This was the first literary work from the pen of Dr. Johnson. His friend Hector was occasionally his amanuensis. The work was, probably, undertaken at the desire of Warren, the bookseller, and was printed at Birmingham; but it appears in the Literary Magazine, or History of the Works of the Learned, for March, 1735, that it was published by Bettesworth and Hitch, Paternoster-row. It contains a narrative of the endeavours of a company of missionaries to convert the people of Abyssinia to the Church of Rome. In the preface to this work

* The entry of this is remarkable for his early resolution to preserve through life a fair and upright character. "1732, Junii 15. Undecim aureos deposui, quo die, quidquid ante matris funus (quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperare licet, viginti scilicet libras, accepi. Usque adeo mihi mea fortuna fingenda est. Interea, ne paupertate vires animi languescant, nec in flagitia egestas abigat, cavendum."

Johnson observes, "that the Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general view of his countrymen, has amused his readers with no romantic absurdities, or incredible fictions. He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration to have described things as he saw them; to have copied nature from the life; and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks, that destroy with their eyes; his crocodiles devour their prey, without tears; and his cataracts fall from the rock, without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants. The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrenness, or blessed with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom, or unceasing sun-shine; nor are the nations, here described, either void of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private and social virtues; here are no Hottentots without religion, polity, or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite, and completely skilled in all sciences; he will discover, what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced, in most countries, their particular inconveniences, by particular favours."——We have here an early specimen of Johnson's manner: the vein of thinking and the frame of the sentences are manifestly his: we see the infant Hercules. The translation of Lobo's Narrative has been reprinted lately in a separate volume, with some other tracts of Dr. Johnson's, and therefore forms no part of this edition; but a compendious account of so interesting a work as Father Lobo's discovery of the head of the Nile will not, it is imagined, be unacceptable to the reader.

Father Lobo, the Portuguese Missionary, embarked, in 1622, in the same fleet with the Count *Vidigueira*, who was appointed, by the king of Portugal, Viceroy of the Indies. They arrived at Goa; and in Jan. 1624, Father Lobo set out on the mission to Abyssinia. Two of the Jesuits, sent on the same commission, were murdered in

their attempt to penetrate into that empire. Lobo [illegible] better success: he surmounted all difficulties, and mad[illegible] his way into the heart of the country. Then follows a description of Abyssinia, formerly the largest empire of which we have an account in history. It extended from the Red Sea to the kingdom of Congo, and from Egypt to the Indian Sea, containing no less than forty provinces. At the time of Lobo's mission, it was not much larger than Spain, consisting then but of five kingdoms, of which part was entirely subject to the emperor, and part paid him a tribute, as an acknowledgment. The provinces were inhabited by Moors, Pagans, Jews, and Christians. The last was in Lobo's time the established and reigning religion. The diversity of people and religion is the reason why the kingdom was under different forms of government, with laws and customs extremely various. Some of the people neither sowed their lands, nor improved them by any kind of culture, living upon milk and flesh, and, like the Arabs, encamping without any settled habitation. In some places they practised no rites of worship, though they believed that, in the regions above, there dwells a Being that governs a world. This deity they call in their language *Oul.* The Christianity, professed by the people in some parts, is so corrupted with superstitions, errors, and heresies, and so mingled with ceremonies borrowed from the Jews, that little, besides the name of Christianity, is to be found among them. The Abyssins cannot properly be said to have either cities or houses; they live in tents or cottages made of straw or clay, very rarely building with stone. Their villages or towns consist of these huts; yet even of such villages they have but few, because the grandees, the viceroys, and the emperor himself, are always in camp, that they may be prepared, upon the most sudden alarm, to meet every emergence in a country which is engaged every year either in foreign wars or intestine commotions. Ethiopia produces very near the same kinds of provision as Portugal, though, by the extreme laziness of the inhabitants, in a much less quantity. What the

Johns ents imagined of the torrid zone being a part of the to th orld uninhabitable, is so far from being true, that the re climate is very temperate. The blacks have better features than in other countries, and are not without wit and ingenuity. Their apprehension is quick, and their judgment sound. There are in this climate two harvests in the year: one in winter, which lasts through the months of July, August, and September; the other in the spring. They have, in the greatest plenty, raisins, peaches, pomegranates, sugar-canes, and some figs. Most of these are ripe about Lent, which the Abyssins keep with great strictness. The animals of the country are the lion, the elephant, the rhinoceros, the unicorn, horses, mules, oxen, and cows without number. They have a very particular custom, which obliges every man, that has a thousand cows, to save every year one day's milk of all his herd, and make a bath with it for his relations. This they do so many days in each year, as they have thousands of cattle; so that, to express how rich a man is, they tell you, *he bathes so many times.*

"Of the river Nile, which has furnished so much controversy, we have a full and clear description. It is called by the natives, ABAVI, the Father of Water. It rises in SACALA, a province of the kingdom of GOIAMA, the most fertile and agreeable part of the Abyssinian dominions. On the eastern side of the country, on the declivity of a mountain, whose descent is so easy, that it seems a beautiful plain, is that source of the Nile, which has been sought after at so much expense and labour. This spring, or rather these two springs, are two holes, each about two feet diameter, a stone's cast distant from each other. One of them is about five feet and a half in depth. Lobo was not able to sink his plummet lower, perhaps, because it was stopped by roots, the whole place being full of trees. A line ten feet did not reach the bottom of the other. These springs are supposed by the Abyssins to be the vents of a great subterraneous lake. At a small distance to the South, is a village called *Guix*,

through which you ascend to the top of the mountain, where there is a little hill, which the idolatrous *Agaci* hold in great veneration. Their priest calls them together to this place once a year; and every one sacrifices a cow, or more, according to the different degrees of wealth and devotion. Hence we have sufficient proof, that these nations always paid adoration to the deity of this famous river.

" As to the course of the Nile, its waters, after their first rise, run towards the east, about the length of a musket-shot; then, turning northward, continue hidden in the grass and weeds for about a quarter of a league, when they re-appear amongst a quantity of rocks. The Nile from its source proceeds with so inconsiderable a current, that it is in danger of being dried up by the hot season; but soon receiving an increase from the GEMMA, the KELTU, the BRANSA, and the other smaller rivers, it expands to such a breadth in the plains of BOAD, which is not above three days' journey from its source, that a musket-ball will scarcely fly from one bank to the other. Here it begins to run northward, winding, however, a little to the east, for the space of nine or ten leagues, and then enters the so-much-talked-of Lake of DAMBIA, flowing with such violent rapidity, that its waters may be distinguished through the whole passage, which is no less than six leagues. Here begins the greatness of the Nile. Fifteen miles farther, in the land of ALATA, it rushes precipitately from the top of a high rock, and forms one of the most beautiful water-falls in the world. Lobo says, he passed under it without being wet, and resting himself, for the sake of the coolness, was charmed with a thousand delightful rainbows, which the sun-beams painted on the water, in all their shining and lively colours.* The fall of this mighty stream, from so great a height, makes a

* This Mr. Bruce, the late traveller, avers to be a downright falsehood. He says, a deep pool of water reaches to the very foot of the rock; and, allowing that there was a seat or bench (which there is not) in the middle of the pool, it is absolutely impossible, by any exertion of human strength, to have arrived at it. But it may be asked, can Mr. Bruce say what was the face of the country in the year 1622, when Lobo saw the magnificent sight which he has described? Mr. Bruce's pool of water may have been formed since; and Lobo, perhaps, was content to sit down without a bench.

noise that may be heard at a considerable distance: but it was not found, that the neighbouring inhabitants were deaf. After the cataract, the Nile collects its scattered stream among the rocks, which are so near each other, that in Lobo's time, a bridge of beams, on which the whole imperial army passed, was laid over them. Sultan SEQUED has since built a stone bridge of one arch, in the same place, for which purpose he procured masons from India. Here the river alters its course, and passes through various kingdoms, such as AMHARA, OLACA, CHOAA, DAMOT, and the kingdom of GOIAMA, and, after various windings, returns within a short day's journey of its spring. To pursue it through all its mazes, and accompany it round the kingdom of GOIAMA, is a journey of twenty-nine days. From Abyssinia, the river passes into the countries of FAZULO and OMBARCA, two vast regions little known, inhabited by nations entirely different from the Abyssins. Their hair, like that of the other blacks in those regions, is short and curled. In the year 1615, RASSELA CHRISTOS, Lieutenant-general to Sultan SEQUED, entered those kingdoms in a hostile manner; but, not being able to get intelligence, returned without attempting any thing. As the empire of Abyssinia terminates at these descents, Lobo followed the course of the Nile no farther, leaving it to rage over barbarous kingdoms, and convey wealth and plenty into Ægypt, which owes to the annual inundations of this river its envied fertility.* Lobo knows nothing of the Nile in the rest of its passage, except that it receives great increase from many other rivers, has several cataracts like that already described, and that few fish are to be found in it: that scarcity is to be attributed to the *river-horse* and the *crocodile*, which destroy the weaker inhabitants of the river. Something, likewise, must be imputed to the *cataracts*, where fish cannot fall without being killed. Lobo adds, that neither he, nor any with whom he conversed about

* After comparing this description with that lately given by Mr. Bruce, the reader will judge whether Lobo is to lose the honour of having been at the head of the Nile near two centuries before any other European traveller.

the *crocodile*, ever saw him weep; and therefore all that hath been said about his tears must be ranked among the fables invented for the amusement of children.

"As to the causes of the inundations of the Nile, Lobo observes, that many an idle hypothesis has been framed. Some theorists ascribe it to the high winds, that stop the current, and force the water above its banks. Others pretend a subterraneous communication between the ocean and the Nile, and that the sea, when violently agitated, swells the river. Many are of opinion, that this mighty flood proceeds from the melting of the snow on the mountains of Æthiopia; but so much snow and such prodigious heat are never met with in the same region. Lobo never saw snow in Abyssinia, except on Mount SEMEN in the kingdom of TIGRE, very remote from the Nile; and on NAMARA, which is, indeed, not far distant, but where there never falls snow enough to wet, when dissolved, the foot of the mountain. To the immense labours of the *Portuguese*, mankind is indebted for the knowledge of the real cause of these inundations, so great and so regular. By them we are informed, that Abyssinia, where the Nile rises, is full of mountains, and, in its natural situation, is much higher than Ægypt; that in the winter, from June to September, no day is without rain; that the Nile receives in its course, all the rivers, brooks, and torrents, that fall from those mountains, and, by necessary consequence, swelling above its banks, fills the plains of Ægypt with inundations, which come regularly about the month of July, or three weeks after the beginning of the rainy season of Æthiopia. The different degrees of this flood are such certain indications of the fruitfulness or sterility of the ensuing year, that it is publicly proclaimed at *Cairo* how much the water hath gained during the night."

Such is the account of the Nile and its inundations, which it is hoped will not be deemed an improper or tedious digression, especially as the whole is an extract from Johnson's translation. He is all the time the actor in the scene, and in his own words relates the story. Having finished

this work, he returned in February 1734, to his native city, and, in the month of August following, published Proposals for printing by subscription the Latin Poems of Politian, with the History of Latin Poetry, from the era of Petrarch to the time of Politian; and also the Life of Politian, to be added by the Editor, Samuel Johnson. The book to be printed in 30 octavo sheets, price five shillings. It is to be regretted that this project failed for want of encouragement. Johnson, it seems, differed from Boileau, Voltaire, and D'Alembert, who have taken upon them to proscribe all modern efforts to write with elegance in a dead language. For a decision pronounced in so high a tone, no good reason can be assigned. The interests of learning require, that the diction of Greece and Rome should be cultivated with care; and he who can write a language with correctness, will be most likely to understand its idiom, its grammar, and its peculiar graces of style. What man of taste would willingly forego the pleasure of reading *Vida*, *Fracastorius*, *Sannazaro*, *Strada*, and others, down to the late elegant productions of Bishop Lowth? The history which Johnson proposed to himself would, beyond all question, have been a valuable addition to the history of letters; but his project failed. His next expedient was to offer his assistance to Cave, the original projector of the Gentleman's Magazine. For this purpose he sent his proposals in a letter, offering, on reasonable terms, occasionally to fill some pages with poems and inscriptions never printed before; with fugitive pieces that deserved to be revived, and critical remarks on authors ancient and modern. Cave agreed to retain him as a correspondent and contributor to the Magazine. What the conditions were cannot now be known; but, certainly, they were not sufficient to hinder Johnson from casting his eyes about him in quest of other employment. Accordingly, in 1735, he made overtures to the reverend Mr. Budworth, Master of a Grammar-school at Brerewood, in Staffordshire, to become his assistant. This proposition did not succeed. Mr. Budworth appre-

hended, that the involuntary motions, to which Johnson's nerves were subject, might make him an object of ridicule with his scholars, and, by consequence, lessen their respect for their master. Another mode of advancing himself presented itself about this time. Mrs. Porter, the widow of a mercer in Birmingham, admired his talents. It is said that she had about eight hundred pounds; and that sum to a person in Johnson's circumstances was an affluent fortune. A marriage took place; and, to turn his wife's money to the best advantage, he projected the scheme of an academy for education. Gilbert Walmsley, at that time Registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court of the Bishop of Lichfield, was distinguished by his erudition, and the politeness of his manners. He was the friend of Johnson, and, by his weight and influence, endeavoured to promote his interest. The celebrated Garrick, whose father, Captain Garrick, lived at Lichfield, was placed in the new seminary of education by that gentleman's advice. Garrick was then about eighteen years old. An accession of seven or eight pupils was the most that could be obtained, though notice was given by a public advertisement,* that at Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by Samuel Johnson.

The undertaking proved abortive. Johnson, having now abandoned all hopes of promoting his fortune in the country, determined to become an adventurer in the world at large. His young pupil, Garrick, had formed the same resolution; and, accordingly, in March 1737, they arrived in London together. Two such candidates for fame perhaps never, before that day, entered the metropolis together. Their stock of money was soon exhausted. In his visionary project of an academy, Johnson had probably wasted his wife's substance; and Garrick's father had little more than his half-pay.—The two fellow-travellers had the world before them, and each was to choose his road to fortune and to fame. They brought with them

* See the Gentleman's Magazine for 1736, p. 418.

genius, and powers of mind, peculiarly formed by nature for the different vocations to which each of them felt himself inclined. They acted from the impulse of young minds even then meditating great things, and with courage anticipating success. Their friend, Mr. Walmsley, by a letter to the Rev. Mr. Colson, who, it seems, was a great mathematician, exerted his good offices in their favour. He gave notice of their intended journey. "Davy Garrick," he said, "will be with you next week; and Johnson, to try his fate with a tragedy, and to get himself employed in some translation either from the Latin or French. Johnson is a very good scholar and a poet, and, I have great hopes, will turn out a fine tragedy-writer. If it should be in your way, I doubt not but you will be ready to recommend and assist your countrymen." Of Mr. Walmsley's merit, and the excellence of his character, Johnson has left a beautiful testimonial at the end of the Life of Edmund Smith. It is reasonable to conclude, that a mathematician, absorbed in abstract speculations, was not able to find a sphere of action for two men who were to be the architects of their own fortune. In three or four years afterwards Garrick came forth with talents that astonished the public. He began his career at Goodman's-fields, and there, *monstratus fatis Vespasianus!* he chose a lucrative profession, and consequently soon emerged from all his difficulties. Johnson was left to toil in the humble walks of literature. A tragedy, as appears by Walmsley's letter, was the whole of his stock. This, most probably, was IRENE; but, if then finished, it was doomed to wait for a more happy period. It was offered to Fleetwood, and rejected. Johnson looked round him for employment. Having while he remained in the country, corresponded with Cave, under a feigned name, he now thought it time to make himself known to a man whom he considered a patron of literature. Cave had announced, by public advertisement, a prize of fifty pounds for the best poem on Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell; and this circumstance diffused an idea of

his liberality. Johnson became connected with him in business, and in a close and intimate acquaintance.—Of Cave's character it is unnecessary to say any thing in this place, as Johnson was afterwards the biographer of his first and most useful patron. To be engaged in the translation of some important book was still the object which Johnson had in view. For this purpose he proposed to give the History of the Council of Trent, with copious notes then lately added to a French edition. Twelve sheets of this work were printed, for which Johnson received forty-nine pounds, as appears by his receipt in the possession of Mr. Nichols, the compiler of that entertaining and useful work, the Gentleman's Magazine. Johnson's translation was never completed: a like design was offered to the public, under the patronage of Dr. Zachary Pearce; and by that contention both attempts were frustrated. Johnson had been commended by Pope for the translation of the Messiah into Latin verse; but he knew no approach to so eminent a man.—With one, however, who was connected with Pope he became acquainted at St. John's Gate; and that person was no other than the well-known Richard Savage, whose Life was afterwards written by Johnson with great elegance, and a depth of moral reflection. Savage was a man of considerable talents. His address, his various accomplishments, and, above all, the peculiarity of his misfortunes, recommended him to Johnson's notice. They became united in the closest intimacy. Both had great parts, and they were equally under the pressure of want. Sympathy joined them in a league of friendship. Johnson has been often heard to relate, that he and Savage walked round Grosvenor-square till four in the morning; in the course of their conversation reforming the world, dethroning princes, establishing new forms of government, and giving laws to the several states of Europe, till fatigued at length with their legislative office, they began to feel the want of refreshment, but could not muster up more than four-pence-halfpenny. Savage, it is true, had

many vices; but vice could never strike its roots in a mind like Johnson's, seasoned early with religion, and the principles of moral rectitude. His first prayer was composed in the year 1738. He had not at that time renounced the use of wine; and, no doubt, occasionally enjoyed his friend and his bottle. The love of late hours, which followed him through life, was, perhaps, originally contracted in company with Savage. However that may be, their connexion was not of long duration. In the year 1738, Savage was reduced to the last distress. Mr. Pope, in a letter to him, expressed his concern for "the miserable withdrawing of his pension after the death of the queen;" and gave him hopes that, "in a short time, he should find himself supplied with a competence, without any dependance on those little creatures, whom we are pleased to call the Great." The scheme proposed to him was, that he should retire to Swansea in Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raised by subscription; Pope was to pay twenty pounds. This plan, though finally established, took more than a year before it was carried into execution. In the mean time, the intended retreat of Savage called to Johnson's mind the third satire of Juvenal, in which that poet takes leave of a friend, who was withdrawing from all the vices of Rome. Struck with this idea, he wrote that well-known poem, called London. The first lines manifestly point to Savage.

> "Though grief and fondness in my breast rebel,
> When injur'd Thales bids the town farewell;
> Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend;
> I praise the hermit, but regret the friend:
> Resolv'd at length, from Vice and London far,
> To breathe in distant fields a purer air;
> And, fix'd on Cambria's solitary shore,
> Give to St. David one true Briton more."

Johnson at that time lodged at Greenwich. He there fixes the scene, and takes leave of his friend: who, he says in his Life, parted from him with tears in his eyes. The poem, when finished, was offered to Cave. It happened, however, that the late Mr. Dodsley was the purchaser, at the price of ten guineas. It was published in

1738; and Pope, we are told, said, "The author, whoever he is, will not be long concealed;" alluding to the passage in Terence, *Ubi, ubi est, diu celari non potest.* Notwithstanding that prediction, it does not appear that, besides the copy-money, any advantage accrued to the author of a poem, written with the elegance and energy of Pope. Johnson, in August 1738, went, with all the fame of his poetry, to offer himself a candidate for the mastership of the school at Appleby, in Leicestershire. The statutes of the place required, that the person chosen should be a master of arts. To remove this objection, the late lord Gower was induced to write to a friend, in order to obtain for Johnson a master's degree in the University of Dublin, by the recommendation of Dr. Swift. The letter was printed in one of the Magazines, and is as follows:

"Sir,

"Mr. Samuel Johnson (author of London, a satire, and some other poetical pieces,) is a native of this county, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who are trustees of a charity-school, now vacant; the certain salary of which is sixty pounds *per* year, of which they are desirous to make him master; but unfortunately he is not capable of receiving their bounty, which would make him happy for life, by not being a master of arts, which, by the statutes of the school, the master of it must be.

"Now these gentlemen do me the honour to think, that I have interest enough in you, to prevail upon you to write to Dean Swift, to persuade the University of Dublin to send a diploma to me, constituting this poor man master of arts in their University. They highly extol the man's learning and probity; and will not be persuaded, that the University will make any difficulty of conferring such a favour upon a stranger, if he is recommended by the Dean. They say, he is not afraid of the strictest examination, though he is of so long a journey; and yet he will venture it, if the Dean thinks it necessary,

choosing rather to die upon the road, than to be starved to death in translating for booksellers, which has been his only subsistence for some time past.

" I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than these good-natured gentlemen apprehend, especially as their election cannot be delayed longer than the 11th of next month. If you see this matter in the same light that it appears to me, I hope you will burn this, and pardon me for giving you so much trouble about an impracticable thing; but, if you think there is a probability of obtaining the favour asked, I am sure your humanity and propensity to relieve merit in distress will incline you to serve the poor man, without my adding any more to the trouble I have already given you, than assuring you, that I am, with great truth, Sir,

" Your faithful humble servant,

" Trentham, Aug. 1st. " GOWER."

This scheme miscarried. There is reason to think, that Swift declined to meddle in the business; and to that circumstance Johnson's known dislike of Swift has been often imputed.

It is mortifying to pursue a man of merit through all his difficulties; and yet this narrative must be, through many following years, the history of Genius and Virtue struggling with Adversity. Having lost the school at Appleby, Johnson was thrown back on the metropolis. Bred to no profession, without relations, friends, or interest, he was condemned to drudgery in the service of Cave, his only patron. In November 1738 was published a translation of Crousaz's Examen of Pope's Essay on Man; " containing a succinct View of the System of the Fatalists, and a Confutation of their Opinions; with an Illustration of the Doctrine of Free Will; and an Enquiry, what view Mr. Pope might have in touching upon the Leibnitzian Philosophy, and Fatalism. By Mr. Crousaz, Professor of Philosophy and Mathematics at Lausanne." This translation has been generally thought a production

of Johnson's pen; but it is now known, that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter has acknowledged it to be one of her early performances. It is certain, however, that Johnson was eager to promote the publication. He considered the foreign philosopher as a man zealous in the cause of religion; and with him he was willing to join against the system of the Fatalists, and the doctrine of Leibnitz. It is well known that Warburton wrote a vindication of Mr. Pope; but there is reason to think, that Johnson conceived an early prejudice against the Essay on Man; and what once took root in a mind like his, was not easily eradicated. His letter to Cave on this subject is still extant, and may well justify Sir John Hawkins, who inferred that Johnson was the translator of Crousaz. The conclusion of the letter is remarkable. "I am yours, IMPRANSUS." If by that Latin word was meant that he had not dined, because he wanted the means, who can read it, even at this hour, without an aching heart?

With a mind naturally vigorous, and quickened by necessity, Johnson formed a multiplicity of projects; but most of them proved abortive. A number of small tracts issued from his pen with wonderful rapidity; such as "MARMOR NORFOLCIENSE; or an Essay on an ancient prophetical Inscription, in Monkish Rhyme, discovered at Lynn in Norfolk. By *Probus Britannicus*." This was a pamphlet against Sir Robert Walpole. According to Sir John Hawkins, a warrant was issued to apprehend the author, who retired with his wife to an obscure lodging near Lambeth Marsh, and there eluded the search of the messengers. But this story has no foundation in truth. Johnson was never known to mention such an incident in his life; and Mr. Steele (late of the Treasury) caused diligent search to be made at the proper offices, and no trace of such a proceeding could be found. In the same year (1739) the Lord Chamberlain prohibited the representation of a tragedy, called "Gustavus Vasa," by Henry Brooke. Under the mask of irony Johnson published, "A Vindication of the Licenser from the malicious and

scandalous Aspersions of Mr. Brooke." Of these two pieces Sir John Hawkins says, "they have neither learning nor wit; nor a single ray of that genius which has since blazed forth;" but, as they have been lately reprinted, the reader, who wishes to gratify his curiosity, is referred to the fourteenth volume of Johnson's works, published by Stockdale.* The lives of Boerhaave, Blake, Barratier, Father Paul, and others, were, about that time, printed in the Gentleman's Magazine. The subscription of fifty pounds a year for Savage was completed; and in July 1739, Johnson parted with the companion of his midnight hours, never to see him more. The separation was, perhaps, an advantage to him, who wanted to make a right use of his time, and even then beheld with self-reproach the waste occasioned by dissipation. His abstinence from wine and strong liquors began soon after the departure of Savage. What habits he contracted in the course of that acquaintance cannot now be known. The ambition of excelling in conversation, and that pride of victory, which, at times, disgraced a man of Johnson's genius, were, perhaps, native blemishes. A fierce spirit of independence, even in the midst of poverty, may be seen in Savage; and, if not thence transfused by Johnson into his own manners, it may, at least, be supposed to have gained strength from the example before him. During that connexion there was, if we believe Sir John Hawkins, a short separation between our author and his wife; but a reconciliation soon took place. Johnson loved her, and shewed his affection in various modes of gallantry, which Garrick used to render ridiculous by his mimicry. The affectation of soft and fashionable airs did not become an unwieldy figure: his admiration was received by the wife with the flutter of an antiquated coquette; and both, it is well known, furnished matter for the lively genius of Garrick.

It is a mortifying reflection, that Johnson, with a store of learning and extraordinary talents, was not able, at the

* It may be found in the present edition.

age of thirty, to force his way to the favour of the public.

" Slow rises worth by poverty depress'd."

" He was still," as he says himself, " to provide for the day that was passing over him." He saw Cave involved in a state of warfare with the numerous competitors, at that time struggling with the Gentleman's Magazine; and gratitude for such supplies as Johnson received dictated a Latin Ode on the subject of that contention. The first lines,

" Urbane, nullis fesse laboribus,
Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,"

put one in mind of Casimir's Ode to Pope Urban:

" Urbane, regum maxime, maxime
Urbane vatum."

The Polish poet, was, probably, at that time in the hands of a man who had meditated the history of the Latin poets. Guthrie the historian had from July 1736 composed the parliamentary speeches for the Magazine; but, from the beginning of the session which opened on the 19th of Nov. 1740, Johnson succeeded to that department, and continued it from that time to the debate on spirituous liquors, which happened in the House of Lords in Feb. 1742-3. The eloquence, the force of argument, and the splendour of language, displayed in the several speeches, are well known, and universally admired. That Johnson was the author of the debates during that period was not generally known; but the secret transpired several years afterwards, and was avowed by himself on the following occasion. Mr. Wedderburne (now lord Loughborough*), Dr. Johnson, Dr. Francis (the translator of Horace), the present writer, and others, dined with the late Mr. Foote. An important debate towards the end of Sir Robert Walpole's administration being mentioned, Dr. Francis observed, " That Mr. Pitt's speech, on that occasion, was the best he had ever read." He added, " That he had employed eight years of his life in the study of Demosthenes, and finished a translation of that celebrated ora-

* Afterwards Earl of Rosslin. He died Jan. 3, 1805.

tor, with all the decorations of style and language within the reach of his capacity; but he had met with nothing equal to the speech above-mentioned." Many of the company remembered the debate; and some passages were cited, with the approbation and applause of all present. During the ardour of conversation Johnson remained silent. As soon as the warmth of praise subsided, he opened with these words:—"That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter-street." The company was struck with astonishment. After staring at each other in silent amaze, Dr. Francis asked, "How that speech could be written by him?" "Sir," said Johnson, "I wrote it in Exeter-street. I never had been in the gallery of the House of Commons but once. Cave had interest with the door-keepers. He, and the persons employed under him, gained admittance: they brought away the subject of discussion, the names of the speakers, the side they took, and the order in which they rose, together with notes of the arguments advanced in the course of the debate. The whole was afterwards communicated to me, and I composed the speeches in the form which they now have in the Parliamentary debates." To this discovery Dr. Francis made answer: "Then, Sir, you have exceeded Demosthenes himself; for to say, that you have exceeded Francis's Demosthenes, would be saying nothing." The rest of the company bestowed lavish encomiums on Johnson: one, in particular, praised his impartiality; observing, that he dealt out reason and eloquence with an equal hand to both parties. "That is not quite true," said Johnson; "I saved appearances tolerably well; but I took care that the WHIG DOGS should not have the best of it." The sale of the Magazine was greatly increased by the Parliamentary debates, which were continued by Johnson till the month of March 1742-3. From that time the Magazine was conducted by Dr. Hawkesworth.

In 1743-4, Osborne, the bookseller, who kept a shop in Gray's Inn, purchased the earl of Oxford's library, at the price of thirteen thousand pounds. He projected a cata-

logue in five octavo volumes, at five shillings each. Johnson was employed in that painful drudgery. He was likewise to collect all such small tracts as were in any degree worth preserving, in order to reprint and publish the whole in a collection, called "The Harleian Miscellany." The catalogue was completed; and the Miscellany in 1749 was published in eight quarto volumes. In this business Johnson was a day-labourer for immediate subsistence, not unlike Gustavus Vasa working in the mines of Dalicarlia. What Wilcox, a bookseller of eminence in the Strand, said to Johnson, on his first arrival in town, was now almost confirmed. He lent our author five guineas, and then asked him, "How do you mean to earn your livelihood in this town?" "By my literary labours," was the answer. Wilcox, staring at him, shook his head: "By your literary labours!—You had better buy a porter's knot." Johnson used to tell this anecdote to Mr. Nichols: but he said, "Wilcox was one of my best friends, and he meant well." In fact, Johnson, while employed in Gray's Inn, may be said to have carried a porter's knot. He paused occasionally to peruse the book that came to his hand. Osborne thought that such curiosity tended to nothing but delay, and objected to it with all the pride and insolence of a man who knew that he paid daily wages. In the dispute that of course ensued, Osborne, with that roughness which was natural to him, enforced his argument by giving the lie. Johnson seized a folio, and knocked the bookseller down. This story has been related as an instance of Johnson's ferocity; but merit cannot always take the spurns of the unworthy with a patient spirit.*

That the history of an author must be found in his works is, in general, a true observation: and was never more apparent than in the present narrative. Every era of Johnson's life is fixed by his writings. In 1744, he published the life of Savage; and then projected a new

* "The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. 'Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him. But it was not in his shop: it was in my own chamber.'"—Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i.

edition of Shakspeare. As a prelude to this design, he published, in 1745, "Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with Remarks on Sir Thomas Hanmer's Edition;" to which were prefixed, "Proposals for a new Edition of Shakspeare, with a Specimen." Of this pamphlet, Warburton, in the Preface to Shakspeare, has given his opinion: "As to all those things, which have been published under the title of Essays, Remarks, Observations, &c. on Shakspeare, if you except some critical notes on Macbeth, given as a specimen of a projected edition, and written, as appears, by a man of parts and genius, the rest are absolutely below a serious notice." But the attention of the public was not excited; there was no friend to promote a subscription; and the project died to revive at a future day. A new undertaking, however, was soon after proposed; namely, an English Dictionary upon an enlarged plan. Several of the most opulent booksellers had meditated a work of this kind; and the agreement was soon adjusted between the parties. Emboldened by this connexion, Johnson thought of a better habitation than he had hitherto known. He had lodged with his wife in courts and alleys about the Strand; but now, for the purpose of carrying on his arduous undertaking, and to be near his printer and friend, Mr. Strahan, he ventured to take a house in Gough-square, Fleet-street. He was told that the earl of Chesterfield was a friend to his undertaking; and in consequence of that intelligence, he published, in 1747, "The Plan of a Dictionary of the English language, addressed to the Right Honourable Philip Dormer, earl of Chesterfield, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State." Mr. Whitehead, afterwards Poet Laureat, undertook to convey the manuscript to his lordship; the consequence was an invitation from lord Chesterfield to the author. A stronger contrast of characters could not be brought together; the Nobleman, celebrated for his wit, and all the graces of polite behaviour; the Author, conscious of his own merit, towering in idea above all competition, versed in scho-

lastic logic, but a stranger to the arts of polite conversation, uncouth, vehement, and vociferous. The coalition was too unnatural. Johnson expected a Mæcenas, and was disappointed. No patronage, no assistance followed. Visits were repeated; but the reception was not cordial. Johnson one day was left a full hour, waiting in an antichamber, till a gentleman should retire, and leave his lordship at leisure. This was the famous Colley Cibber. Johnson saw him go, and fired with indignation, rushed out of the house.* What lord Chesterfield thought of his visitor may be seen in a passage in one of that Nobleman's letters to his son.† "There is a man, whose moral character, deep learning, and superior parts, I acknowledge, admire, and respect; but whom it is so impossible for me to love, that I am almost in a fever whenever I am in his company. His figure (without being deformed) seems made to disgrace or ridicule the common structure of the human body. His legs and arms are never in the position which, according to the situation of his body, they ought to be in, but constantly employed in committing acts of hostility upon the Graces. He throws any where, but down his throat, whatever he means to drink; and mangles what he means to carve. Inattentive to all the regards of social life, he mis-times and mis-places every thing. He disputes with heat indiscriminately, mindless of the rank, character, and situation of those with whom he disputes. Absolutely ignorant of the several gradations of familiarity and respect, he is exactly the same to his superiors, his equals, and his inferiors; and, therefore, by a necessary consequence, is absurd to two of the three. Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost I can do for him is, to consider him a respectable Hottentot."‡ Such was the idea entertained by lord Chesterfield. After the incident of Colley Cibber, Johnson never repeated his visits. In his high and decisive

* Dr. Johnson assured Boswell, that there was not the least foundation for this story. Boswell's Life, vol. i.

† Letter CCXII.

‡ The application of this character to Dr. Johnson rests only upon conjecture.

tone, he has been often heard to say, "Lord Chesterfield is a Wit among Lords, and a Lord among Wits."

In the course of the year 1747, Garrick, in conjunction with Lacy, became patentee of Drury-lane playhouse. For the opening of the theatre, at the usual time, Johnson wrote for his friend the well-known prologue, which, to say no more of it, may at least be placed on a level with Pope's to the tragedy of Cato. The playhouse being now under Garrick's direction, Johnson thought the opportunity fair to think of his tragedy of Irene, which was his whole stock on his first arrival in town, in the year 1737. That play was accordingly put into rehearsal in January 1749. As a precursor to prepare the way, and to awaken the public attention, "The Vanity of Human Wishes, a Poem in Imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, by the Author of *London*," was published in the same month. In the Gentleman's Magazine, for February 1749, we find that the tragedy of *Irene* was acted at Drury-lane, on Monday, February the 6th, and from that time, without interruption, to Monday, February the 20th, being in all thirteen nights. Since that time it has not been exhibited on any stage. *Irene* may be added to some other plays in our language, which have lost their place in the theatre, but continue to please in the closet. During the representation of this piece, Johnson attended every night behind the scenes. Conceiving that his character as an author required some ornament for his person, he chose, upon that occasion, to decorate himself with a handsome waistcoat, and a gold-laced hat. The late Mr. Topham Beauclerc, who had a great deal of that humour which pleases the more for seeming undesigned, used to give a pleasant description of this Green-room finery, as related by the author himself; "But," said Johnson, with great gravity, "I soon laid aside my gold-laced hat, lest it should make me proud." The amount of the three benefit nights for the tragedy of *Irene* it is to be feared, was not very considerable, as the profit, that stimulating motive, never invited the author to another dramatic attempt. Some years af-

terwards, when the present writer was intimate with Garrick, and knew Johnson to be in distress, he asked the manager why he did not produce another tragedy for his Lichfield friend? Garrick's answer was remarkable; "When Johnson writes *tragedy*, *declamation roars*, and *passion sleeps:* when Shakspeare wrote, he dipped his pen in his own heart."

There may, perhaps, be a degree of sameness in this regular way of tracing an author from one work to another, and the reader may feel the effect of a tedious monotony; but in the life of Johnson there are no other landmarks. He was now forty years old, and had mixed but little with the world. He followed no profession, transacted no business, and was a stranger to what is called a town-life. We are now arrived at the brightest period he had hitherto known. His name broke out upon mankind with a degree of lustre that promised a triumph over all his difficulties. The Life of Savage was admired as a beautiful and instructive piece of biography. The two imitations of Juvenal were thought to rival even the excellence of Pope; and the tragedy of *Irene*, though uninteresting on the stage, was universally admired in the closet, for the propriety of the sentiments, the richness of the language, and the general harmony of the whole composition. His fame was widely diffused; and he had made his agreement with the booksellers for his English Dictionary at the sum of fifteen hundred guineas; part of which was to be, from time to time, advanced in proportion to the progress of the work. This was a certain fund for his support, without being obliged to write fugitive pieces for the petty supplies of the day. Accordingly we find that, in 1749, he established a club, consisting of ten in number, at Horseman's in Ivy-lane, on every Tuesday evening. This is the first scene of social life to which Johnson can be traced out of his own house. The members of this little society were, Samuel Johnson; Dr. Salter, (father of the late Master of the Charter-house;) Dr. Hawkesworth; Mr. Ryland, a merchant; Mr. Payne,

a bookseller in Paternoster-row; Mr. Sam. Dyer, a learned young man; Dr. William M'Ghie, a Scotch physician: Dr. Edmund Barker, a young physician; Dr. Bathurst, another young physician; and Sir John Hawkins. This list is given by Sir John, as it should seem, with no other view than to draw a spiteful and malevolent character of almost every one of them. Mr. Dyer, whom Sir John says he loved with the affection of a brother, meets with the harshest treatment, because it was his maxim, that *to live in peace with mankind, and in a temper to do good offices, was the most essential part of our duty.* That notion of moral goodness gave umbrage to Sir John Hawkins, and drew down upon the memory of his friend the bitterest imputations. Mr. Dyer, however, was admired and loved through life. He was a man of literature. Johnson loved to enter with him into a discussion of metaphysical, moral, and critical subjects; in those conflicts, exercising his talents, and according to his custom, always contending for victory. Dr. Bathurst was the person on whom Johnson fixed his affection. He hardly ever spoke of him without tears in his eyes. It was from him, who was a native of Jamaica, that Johnson received into his service Frank,* the black servant, whom on account of his master, he valued to the end of his life. At the time of instituting the club in Ivy-lane, Johnson had projected the *Rambler*. The title was most probably suggested by the *Wanderer;* a poem which he mentions, with the warmest praise, in the Life of Savage. With the same spirit of independence with which he wished to live, it was now his pride to write. He communicated his plan to none of his friends: he desired no assistance, relying entirely on his own fund, and the protection of the Divine Being, which he implored in a solemn form of prayer, composed by himself for the occasion. Having formed a resolution to undertake a work that might be of use and honour to his country, he thought, with Milton, that this was not to be obtained "but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit, that can en-

* See Gent. Mag. vol. LXXI. p. 190.

rich with all utterance and knowledge, and send out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases."

Having invoked the special protection of Heaven, and by that act of piety fortified his mind, he began the great work of the *Rambler*. The first number was published on Tuesday, March the 20th, 1750; and from that time was continued regularly every Tuesday and Saturday for the space of two years, when it was finally closed on Saturday, March 14, 1752. As it began with motives of piety, so it appears that the same religious spirit glowed with unabating ardour to the last. His conclusion is: "The Essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth." The whole number of Essays amounted to two hundred and eight. Addison's, in the Spectator, are more in number, but not half in point of quantity: Addison was not bound to publish on stated days; he could watch the ebb and flow of his genius, and send his paper to the press when his own taste was satisfied. Johnson's case was very different. He wrote singly and alone. In the whole progress of the work he did not receive more than ten essays. This was a scanty contribution. For the rest, the author has described his situation. "He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topic, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour

of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce." Of this excellent production the number sold on each day did not amount to five hundred: of course, the bookseller, who paid the author four guineas a week, did not carry on a successful trade. His generosity and perseverance deserve to be commended: and happily, when the collection appeared in volumes, were amply rewarded. Johnson lived to see his labours flourish in a tenth edition. His posterity, as an ingenious French writer has said on a similar occasion, began in his life-time.

In the beginning of 1750, soon after the *Rambler* was set on foot, Johnson was induced by the arts of a vile impostor to lend his assistance, during a temporary delusion, to a fraud not to be paralleled in the annals of literature. One LAUDER, a native of Scotland, who had been a teacher in the University of Edinburgh, had conceived a mortal antipathy to the name and character of Milton. His reason was, because the prayer of Pamela, in Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, was, as he supposed, maliciously inserted by the great poet in an edition of the Eikon Basilike, in order to fix an imputation of impiety on the memory of the murdered king. Fired with resentment, and willing to reap the profits of a gross imposition, this man collected from several Latin poets, such as Masenius the Jesuit, Staphorstius a Dutch divine, Beza, and others, all such passages as bore any kind of resemblance to different places in the Paradise Lost; and these he published from time to time, in the Gentleman's Magazine, with occasional interpolations of lines, which he himself translated from Milton. The public credulity swallowed all with eagerness; and Milton was supposed to be guilty of plagiarism from inferior modern writers. The fraud succeeded so well, that Lauder collected the whole into a volume, and advertised it under the title of "An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns, in his Paradise Lost; dedicated to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge." While the book was in the press, the proof-sheets were shewn to Johnson

at the Ivy-lane Club, by Payne the bookseller, who was one of the members. No man in that society was in possession of the authors from whom Lauder professed to make his extracts. The charge was believed, and the contriver of it found his way to Johnson, who is represented by Sir John Hawkins, not indeed as an accomplice in the fraud, but, through motives of malignity to Milton, delighting in the detection, and exulting that the poet's reputation would suffer by the discovery. More malice to a deceased friend cannot well be imagined. Hawkins adds, "*that he wished well to the argument must be inferred from the preface, which indubitably was written by him.*" The preface, it is well known, was written by Johnson, and for that reason is inserted in this edition. But if Johnson approved of the argument, it was no longer than while he believed it founded in truth. Let us advert to his own words in that very preface. "Among the inquiries to which the ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospection of the progress of this mighty genius in the construction of his work; a view of the fabric gradually rising, perhaps from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure through all its varieties, to the simplicity of the first plan; to find what was projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected; whether its founder dug them from the quarries of nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own." These were the motives that induced Johnson to assist Lauder with a preface; and are not these the motives of a critic and a scholar? What reader of taste, what man of real knowledge, would not think his time well employed in an inquiry so curious, so interesting, and instructive? If Lauder's facts were really true, who would not be glad, without the smallest tincture of malevolence, to receive real information? It is painful to be

thus obliged to vindicate a man who, in his heart, towered above the petty arts of fraud and imposition, against an injudicious biographer, who undertook to be his editor, and the protector of his memory. Another writer, Dr. Towers, in an Essay on the Life and Character of Dr. Johnson, seems to countenance this calumny. He says, *It can hardly be doubted, but that Johnson's aversion to Milton's politics was the cause of that alacrity with which he joined with Lauder in his infamous attack on our great epic poet, and which induced him to assist in that transaction.* These words would seem to describe an accomplice, were they not immediately followed by an express declaration, that Johnson was *unacquainted with the imposture.* Dr. Towers adds, *It seems to have been by way of making some compensation to the memory of Milton, for the share he had in the attack of Lauder, that Johnson wrote the prologue, spoken by Garrick, at Drury-lane theatre,* 1750, *on the performance of the Masque of Comus, for the benefit of Milton's grand-daughter.* Dr. Towers is not free from prejudice; but, as Shakspeare has it, " he begets a temperance to give it smoothness." He is therefore entitled to a dispassionate answer. When Johnson wrote the prologue, it does appear that he was aware of the malignant artifices practised by Lauder. In the postscript to Johnson's preface, a subscription is proposed, for relieving the grand-daughter of the author of Paradise Lost. Dr. Towers will agree that this shews Johnson's alacrity in doing good. That alacrity shewed itself again in the letter printed in the European Magazine, January 1785, and there said to have appeared originally in the General Advertiser, 4th April, 1750, by which the public were invited to embrace the opportunity of paying a just regard to the illustrious dead, united with the pleasure of doing good to the living. The letter adds, "To assist industrious indigence, struggling with distress, and debilitated by age, is a display of virtue, and an acquisition of happiness and honour. Whoever, therefore, would be thought capable of pleasure in reading the works of our incom-

parable Milton, and not so destitute of gratitude as to refuse to lay out a trifle, in a rational and elegant entertainment, for the benefit of his living remains, for the exercise of their own virtue, the increase of their reputation, and the consciousness of their doing good, should appear at Drury-lane theatre, to-morrow, April 5, when COMUS will be performed for the benefit of Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, grand-daughter to the author, and the only surviving branch of his family. *Nota bene*, there will be a new prologue on the occasion written by the author of Irene, and spoken by Mr. Garrick." The man who had thus exerted himself to serve the grand-daughter, cannot be supposed to have entertained personal malice to the grandfather. It is true, that the malevolence of Lauder, as well as the impostures of Archibald Bower, were fully detected by the labours, in the cause of truth, of the Rev. Dr. Douglas, now Lord Bishop of Salisbury.

——" Diram qui contudit Hydram,
Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit."

But the pamphlet, entitled, " Milton vindicated from the Charge of Plagiarism brought against him by Mr. Lauder, and Lauder himself convicted of several Forgeries and gross Impositions on the Publick, by John Douglas, M. A. Rector of Eaton Constantine, Salop," was not published till the year 1751. In that work, p. 77, Dr. Douglas says, " It is to be hoped, nay, it is *expected*, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments and inimitable style point out the author of Lauder's preface and postscript, will no longer allow A MAN to *plume himself with his feathers*, who appears so little to have deserved his assistance; an assistance which I am persuaded would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts which I have been the instrument of conveying to the world." We have here a contemporary testimony to the integrity of Dr. Johnson throughout the whole of that vile transaction. What was the consequence of the requisition made by Dr. Douglas? Johnson, whose ruling passion may be said to be the love

of truth, convinced Lauder that it would be more to his interest to make a full confession of his guilt, than to stand forth the convicted champion of a lie; and for this purpose he drew up, in the strongest terms, a recantation in a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Douglas, which Lauder signed, and published in the year 1751. That piece will remain a lasting memorial of the abhorrence with which Johnson beheld a violation of truth. Mr. Nichols, whose attachment to his illustrious friend was unwearied, shewed him in 1780 a book called 'Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton,' in which the affair of Lauder was renewed with virulence, and a *poetical scale* in the Literary Magazine 1758 (when Johnson had ceased to write in that collection) was urged as an additional proof of deliberate malice. He read the libellous passage with attention, and instantly wrote on the margin: "In the business of Lauder I was deceived, partly by thinking the man too frantic to be fraudulent. Of the *poetical scale* quoted from the Magazine I am not the author. I fancy it was put in after I had quitted that work; for I not only did not write it, but I do not remember it." As a critic and a scholar, Johnson was willing to receive what numbers at the time believed to be true information: when he found that the whole was a forgery, he renounced all connection with the author.

In March 1752, he felt a severe stroke of affliction in the death of his wife. The last number of the Rambler, as already mentioned, was on the 14th of that month. The loss of Mrs. Johnson was then approaching, and, probably, was the cause that put an end to those admirable periodical essays. It appears that she died on the 28th of March: in a memorandum, at the foot of the Prayers and Meditations, that is called her Dying Day. She was buried at Bromley, under the care of Dr. Hawkesworth. Johnson placed a Latin inscription on her tomb, in which he celebrated her beauty. With the singularity of his prayers for his deceased wife, from that time to the end of his days, the world is sufficiently acquainted. On

Easter-Day, 22d April, 1764, his memorandum says: "Thought on Tetty, poor dear Tetty! with my eyes full. Went to Church. After sermon I recommended Tetty in a prayer by herself; and my father, mother, brother, and Bathurst, in another. I did it only once, so far as it might be lawful for me." In a prayer, January 23, 1759, the day on which his mother was buried, he commends, as far as may be lawful, her soul to God, imploring for her whatever is most beneficial to her in her present state. In this habit he persevered to the end of his days. The Rev. Mr. Strahan, the editor of the Prayers and Meditations, observes, "That Johnson, on some occasions, prays that the Almighty *may have had mercy* on his wife and Mr. Thrale; evidently supposing their sentence to have been already passed in the Divine Mind; and, by consequence, proving, that he had no belief in a state of purgatory, and no reason for praying for the dead that could impeach the sincerity of his profession as a protestant." Mr. Strahan adds, "That, in praying for the regretted tenants of the grave, Johnson conformed to a practice which has been retained by many learned members of the Established Church, though the Liturgy no longer admits it, If *where the tree falleth, there it shall be;* if our state, at the close of life, is to be the measure of our final sentence, then prayers for the dead, being visibly fruitless, can be regarded only as the vain oblations of superstition. But of all superstitions this, perhaps, is one of the least unamiable, and most incident to a good mind. If our sensations of kindness be intense, those, whom we have revered and loved, death cannot wholly seclude from our concern. It is true, for the reason just mentioned, such evidences of our surviving affection may be thought ill-judged; but surely they are generous, and some natural tenderness is due even to a superstition, which thus originates in piety and benevolence." These sentences, extracted from the Rev. Mr. Strahan's preface, if they are not a full justification, are, at least, a beautiful apology. It will not be improper to add what Johnson himself has

said on the subject. Being asked by Mr. Boswell,* what he thought of purgatory as believed by the Roman Catholicks? his answer was, "It is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment; nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits; and, therefore, that God is graciously pleased to allow a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see there is nothing unreasonable in this; and if it be once established that there are souls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life." This was Dr. Johnson's guess into futurity; and to guess is the utmost that man can do. *Shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it.*

Mrs. Johnson left a daughter, Lucy Porter, by her first husband. She had contracted a friendship with Mrs. Anne Williams, the daughter of Zachary Williams, a physician of eminence in South Wales, who had devoted more than thirty years of a long life to the study of the longitude, and was thought to have made great advances towards that important discovery. His letters to Lord Halifax, and the Lords of the Admiralty, partly corrected and partly written by Dr. Johnson, are still extant in the hands of Mr. Nichols.† We there find Dr. Williams, in the eighty-third year of his age, stating, that he had prepared an instrument, which might be called an epitome or miniature of the terraqueous globe, shewing, with the assistance of tables constructed by himself, the variations of the magnetic needle, and ascertaining the longitude for the safety of navigation. It appears that this scheme had been referred to Sir Isaac Newton; but that great philosopher excusing himself on account of his advanced age, all applications were useless till 1751, when the subject was referred, by order of Lord Anson, to Dr. Bradley, the cele-

* Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 328, 4to. Edit.

† See Gentleman's Magazine for Nov. and Dec. 1787.

brated professor of astronomy. His report was unfavourable,* though it allows that a considerable progress had been made. Dr. Williams, after all his labour and expence, died in a short time after, a melancholy instance of unrewarded merit. His daughter possessed uncommon talents, and, though blind, had an alacrity of mind that made her conversation agreeable, and even desirable. To relieve and appease melancholy reflections, Johnson took her home to his house in Gough-square. In 1755, Garrick gave her a benefit-play, which produced two hundred pounds. In 1766, she published, by subscription, a quarto volume of Miscellanies, and increased her little stock to three hundred pounds. That fund, with Johnson's protection, supported her through the remainder of her life.

During the two years in which the Rambler was carried on, the Dictionary proceeded by slow degrees. In May 1752, having composed a prayer preparatory to his return from tears and sorrow to the duties of life, he resumed his grand design, and went on with vigour, giving, however, occasional assistance to his friend Dr. Hawkesworth in the Adventurer, which began soon after the Rambler was laid aside. Some of the most valuable essays in that collection were from the pen of Johnson. The Dictionary was completed towards the end of 1754; and, Cave being then no more, it was a mortification to the author of that noble addition to our language, that his old friend did not live to see the triumph of his labours. In May 1755, that great work was published. Johnson was desirous that it should come from one who had obtained academical honours; and for that purpose his friend the Rev. Thos. Warton obtained for him in the preceding month of February, a diploma for a master's degree from the University of Oxford.—Garrick, on the publication of the Dictionary, wrote the following lines:

"Talk of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier can beat ten of France.
Would we alter the boast from the sword to the pen,
Our odds are still greater, still greater our men.

* See Gentleman's Magazine for Dec. 1787, p. 1042.

In the deep mines of science though Frenchmen may toil,
Can their strength be compar'd to Locke, Newton, or Boyle?
Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their powers,
Their versemen and prosemen, then match them with ours.
First Shakspeare and Milton, like gods in the fight,
Have put their whole drama and epic to flight.
In satires, epistles, and odes would they cope?
Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope.
And Johnson well arm'd, like a hero of yore,
Has beat forty French, and will beat forty more."

It is, perhaps, needless to mention, that Forty was the number of the French Academy, at the time when their Dictionary was published to settle their language.

In the course of the winter preceding this grand publication, the late earl of Chesterfield gave two essays in the periodical paper, called "The World," dated November 28, and December 5, 1754, to prepare the public for so important a work. The original plan, addressed to his lordship in the year 1747, is there mentioned in terms of the highest praise; and this was understood, at the time, to be a courtly way of soliciting a dedication of the Dictionary to himself. Johnson treated this civility with disdain. He said to Garrick and others, "I have sailed a long and painful voyage round the world of the English language; and does he now send out two cockboats to tow me into harbour?" He had said in the last number of the Rambler, "that, having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication." Such a man when he had finished his Dictionary, "not," as he says himself, "in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow, and without the patronage of the great," was not likely to be caught by the lure thrown out by lord Chesterfield. He had in vain sought the patronage of that nobleman; and his pride, exasperated by disappointment, drew from him the following letter, dated in the month of February 1755.

" To the Right Honourable the Earl of CHESTERFIELD.

" MY LORD,

" I HAVE been lately informed, by the proprietors of the World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

" When upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish, that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre;* that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending. But I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing, which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

" Seven years, my lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward room, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

" The Shepherd in Virgil grew acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

" Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed

till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed, though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

"My Lord,
"Your Lordship's most humble
"and most obedient servant,
"Samuel Johnson."

It is said, upon good authority, that Johnson once received from lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds. It were to be wished that the secret had never transpired. It was mean to receive it, and meaner to give it. It may be imagined, that for Johnson's ferocity, as it has been called, there was some foundation in his finances; and, as his Dictionary was brought to a conclusion, that money was now to flow in upon him. The reverse was the case. For his subsistence, during the progress of the work, he had received at different times the amount of his contract; and when his receipts were produced to him at a tavern-dinner, given by the booksellers, it appeared, that he had been paid a hundred pounds and upwards more than his due. The author of a book called *Lexiphanes*, written by a Mr. Campbell, a Scotchman, and purser of a man of war, endeavoured to blast his laurels, but in vain. The world applauded, and Johnson never replied. "Abuse," he said, "is often of service: there is nothing so dangerous to an author as silence; his name, like a shuttlecock, must be beat backward and forward, or it falls to the ground."

Lexiphanes professed to be an imitation of the pleasant manner of Lucian; but humour was not the talent of the writer of Lexiphanes. As Dryden says, "He had too much horse-play in his raillery."

It was in the summer 1754, that the present writer became acquainted with Dr. Johnson. The cause of his first visit is related by Mrs. Piozzi nearly in the following manner. "Mr. Murphy being engaged in a periodical paper, the Gray's-Inn Journal, was at a friend's house in the country, and not being disposed to lose pleasure for business, wished to content his bookseller by some unstudied essay. He therefore took up a French *Journal Littéraire*, and, translating something he liked, sent it away to town. Time, however, discovered that he translated from the French a Rambler, which had been taken from the English without acknowledgment. Upon this discovery Mr. Murphy thought it right to make his excuses to Dr. Johnson. He went next day, and found him covered with soot, like a chimney-sweeper, in a little room, as if he had been acting Lungs in the Alchemist, *making æther*. This being told by Mr. Murphy in company, Come, come, said Dr. Johnson, the story is black enough; but it was a happy day that brought you first to my house." After this first visit the author of this narrative by degrees grew intimate with Dr. Johnson. The first striking sentence that he heard from him, was in a few days after the publication of lord Bolingbroke's posthumous works. Mr. Garrick asked him, "If he had seen them?" "Yes, I have seen them." "What do you think of them?" "Think of them!" He made a long pause, and then replied: "Think of them! A scoundrel, and a coward! A scoundrel, who spent his life in charging a gun against Christianity; and a coward, who was afraid of hearing the report of his own gun; but left half-a-crown to a hungry Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death." His mind, at this time strained and overlaboured by constant exertion, called for an interval of repose and indolence. But indolence was the time of

danger: it was then that his spirits, not employed abroad, turned with inward hostility against himself. His reflections on his own life and conduct were always severe; and, wishing to be immaculate, he destroyed his own peace by unnecessary scruples. He tells us, that when he surveyed his past life, he discovered nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body, and disturbances of mind, very near to madness. His life, he says, from his earliest years, was wasted in a morning bed; and his reigning sin was a general sluggishness, to which he was always inclined, and, in part of his life, almost compelled, by morbid melancholy, and weariness of mind. This was his constitutional malady, derived, perhaps, from his father, who was, at times, overcast with a gloom that bordered on insanity. When to this it is added, that Johnson, about the age of twenty, drew up a description of his infirmities, for Dr. Swinfen, at that time an eminent physician in Staffordshire; and received an answer to his letter, importing, that the symptoms indicated a future privation of reason; who can wonder that he was troubled with melancholy and dejection of spirit? An apprehension of the worst calamity that can befall human nature hung over him all the rest of his life, like the sword of the tyrant suspended over his guest. In his sixtieth year he had a mind to write the history of his melancholy; but he desisted, not knowing whether it would not too much disturb him. In a Latin poem, however, to which he has prefixed as a title, ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ, he has left a picture of himself, drawn with as much truth, and as firm a hand, as can be seen in the portraits of Hogarth or Sir Joshua Reynolds. The learned reader will find the original poem in this volume; and it is hoped, that a translation, or rather imitation, of so curious a piece will not be improper in this place.

KNOW YOURSELF.

(AFTER REVISING AND ENLARGING THE ENGLISH LEXICON, OR DICTIONARY.)

When Scaliger, whole years of labour past,
Beheld his Lexicon complete at last,
And weary of his task, with wond'ring eyes,
Saw from words pil'd on words a fabric rise,
He curs'd the industry, inertly strong,
In creeping toil that could persist so long,
And if, enrag'd he cried, Heav'n meant to shed
Its keenest vengeance on the guilty head,
The drudgery of words the damn'd would know,
Doom'd to write Lexicons in endless woe.*

Yes, you had cause, great genius, to repent;
" You lost good days, that might be better spent;"
You well might grudge the hours of ling'ring pain,
And view your learned labours with disdain.
To you were given the large expanded mind,
The flame of genius, and the taste refin'd.
'Twas yours on eagle wings aloft to soar,
And amidst rolling worlds the Great First Cause explore;
To fix the eras of recorded time,
And live in ev'ry age and ev'ry clime;
Record the Chiefs, who propt their Country's cause;
Who founded Empires, and establish'd Laws;
To learn whate'er the Sage with virtue fraught,
Whate'er the Muse of moral wisdom taught.
These were your quarry; these to you were known,
And the world's ample volume was your own.

Yet warn'd by me, ye pigmy Wits, beware,
Nor with immortal Scaliger compare.

* See Scaliger's Epigram on this subject, communicated without doubt by Dr. Johnson, Gent. Mag. 1743, p. 8.

For me, though his example strike my view,
Oh! not for me his footsteps to pursue.
Whether first Nature, unpropitious, cold,
This clay compounded in a ruder mould;
Or the slow current, loit'ring at my heart,
No gleam of wit or fancy can impart;
Whate'er the cause, from me no numbers flow
No visions warm me, and no raptures glow.
A mind like Scaliger's, superior still,
No grief could conquer, no misfortune chill.
Though for the maze of words his native skies
He seem'd to quit, 'twas but again to rise;
To mount once more to the bright source of day,
And view the wonders of th' ethereal way,
The love of Fame his gen'rous bosom fir'd;
Each Science hail'd him, and each Muse inspir'd.
For him the Sons of Learning trimm'd the bays,
And nations grew harmonious in his praise.
My task performed, and all my labours o'er,
For me what lot has Fortune now in store?
The listless will succeeds, that worst disease,
The rack of indolence, the sluggish ease.
Care grows on care, and o'er my aching brain,
Black Melancholy pours her morbid train.
No kind relief, no lenitive at hand,
I seek at midnight clubs, the social Band;
But midnight clubs, where wit with noise conspires,
Where Comus revels, and where wine inspires,
Delight no more: I seek my lonely bed,
And call on Sleep to sooth my languid head.
But Sleep from these sad lids flies far away;
I mourn all night, and dread the coming day.
Exhausted, tir'd, I throw my eyes around,
To find some vacant spot on classic ground;
And soon, vain hope! I form a grand design;
Languor succeeds, and all my pow'rs decline.
If Science open not her richest vein,
Without materials all our toil is vain.

A form to rugged stone when Phidias gives,
Beneath his touch a new creation lives.
Remove his marble, and his genius dies:
With Nature then no breathing statue vies.

Whate'er I plan, I feel my pow'rs confin'd
By Fortune's frown and penury of mind.
I boast no knowledge glean'd with toil and strife,
That bright reward of a well-acted life.
I view myself, while Reason's feeble light
Shoots a pale glimmer through the gloom of night.
While passions, error, phantoms of the brain,
And vain opinions, fill the dark domain;
A dreary void, where fears with grief combin'd
Waste all within, and desolate the mind.

What then remains? Must I in slow decline
To mute inglorious ease old age resign?
Or, bold Ambition kindling in my breast,
Attempt some arduous task? Or, were it best,
Brooding o'er Lexicons to pass the day,
And in that labour drudge my life away?

Such is the picture for which Dr. Johnson sat to himself. He gives the prominent features of his character; his lassitude, his morbid melancholy, his love of fame, his dejection, his tavern parties, and his wandering reveries, *Vacuæ mala somnia mentis*, about which so much has been written; all are painted in miniature, but in vivid colours, by his own hand. His idea of writing more Dictionaries was not merely said in verse. Mr. Hamilton, who was at that time an eminent printer, and well acquainted with Dr. Johnson, remembers that he engaged in a Commercial Dictionary, and, as appears by the receipts in his possession, was paid his price for several sheets; but he soon relinquished the undertaking. It is probable, that he found himself not sufficiently versed in that branch of knowledge.

He was again reduced to the expedient of short compositions for the supply of the day. The writer of this narrative has now before him a letter in Dr. Johnson's handwriting, which shews the distress and melancholy situation of the man, who had written the Rambler, and finished the great work of his Dictionary. The letter is directed to Mr. Richardson (the author of Clarissa), and is as follows:

"SIR,

"I am obliged to entreat your assistance. I am now under an arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings. Mr. Strahan, from whom I should have received the necessary help in this case, is not at home; and I am afraid of not finding Mr. Millar. If you will be so good as to send me this sum I will very gratefully repay you, and add it to all former obligations. I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient,

"and most humble servant,

"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

"Gough Square, 16th March."

In the margin of this letter there is a memorandum in these words: "March 16, 1756, Sent six guineas. Witness, Wm. Richardson." For the honour of an admired writer, it is to be regretted, that we do not find a more liberal entry. To his friend in distress he sent eight shillings more than was wanted. Had an incident of this kind occurred in one of his Romances, Richardson would have known how to grace his hero; but in fictitious scenes generosity costs the writer nothing.

About this time Johnson contributed several papers to a periodical Miscellany, called The "Visitor," from motives which are highly honourable to him, a compassionate regard for the late Mr. Christopher Smart. The criticism on Pope's Epitaphs appeared in that work. In a short time after, he became a reviewer in the Literary Magazine, under the auspices of the late Mr. Newbery, a man of a projecting head, good taste, and great industry. This em-

ployment engrossed but little of Johnson's time. He resigned himself to indolence, took no exercise, rose about two, and then received the visits of his friends. Authors, long since forgotten, waited on him as their oracle, and he gave responses in the chair of criticism. He listened to the complaints, the schemes, and the hopes and fears of a crowd of inferior writers, "who," he said, in the words of Roger Ascham, "lived *men knew not how, and died obscure, men marked not when.*" He believed, that he could give a better history of Grub-street than any man living. His house was filled with a succession of visitors till four or five in the evening. During the whole time he presided at his tea-table. Tea was his favourite beverage; and, when the late Jonas Hanway pronounced his anathema against the use of tea, Johnson rose in defence of his habitual practice, declaring himself "in that article a hardened sinner, who had for years diluted his meals with the infusion of that fascinating plant; whose tea-kettle had no time to cool; who with tea solaced the midnight hour, and with tea welcomed the morning."

The proposal for a new edition of Shakspeare, which had formerly miscarried, was resumed in the year 1756. The booksellers readily agreed to his terms; and subscription-tickets were issued out. For undertaking this work, money, he confessed, was the inciting motive. His friends exerted themselves to promote his interest; and, in the mean time, he engaged in a new periodical production called "THE IDLER." The first number appeared on Saturday, April, 15, 1758; and the last, April 5, 1760. The profits of this work, and the subscriptions for the new edition of Shakspeare, were the means by which he supported himself for four or five years. In 1759 was published Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia. His translation of Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia seems to have pointed out that country for the scene of action; and *Rassela Christos*, the General of *Sultan Sequed*, mentioned in that work, most probably suggested the name of the prince. The author wanted to set out on a journey to Lichfield, in order

to pay the last offices of filial piety to his mother, who, at the age of ninety, was then near her dissolution; but money was necessary. Mr. Johnston, a bookseller, who has long since left off business, gave one hundred pounds for the copy. With this supply, Johnson set out for Lichfield: but did not arrive in time to close the eyes of a parent whom he loved. He attended the funeral, which, as appears among his memorandums, was on the 23d of January, 1759.

Johnson now found it necessary to retrench his expences. He gave up his house in Gough-square. Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. He retired to Gray's-Inn, and soon removed to chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, where he lived in poverty, total idleness, and the pride of literature. *Magni stat nominis umbra.* Mr. Fitzherbert (the father of Lord St. Helen's, the present minister at Madrid), a man distinguished through life for his benevolence and other amiable qualities, used to say, that he paid a morning visit to Johnson, intending from his chambers to send a letter into the city; but, to his great surprize, he found an author by profession without pen, ink, or paper. The present Bishop of Salisbury was also among those who endeavoured by constant attention, to sooth the cares of a mind which he knew to be afflicted with gloomy apprehensions. At one of the parties made at his house, Boscovich, the Jesuit, who had then lately introduced the Newtonian philosophy at Rome, and, after publishing an elegant Latin poem on the subject, was made a fellow of the Royal Society, was one of the company invited to meet Dr. Johnson. The conversation at first was mostly in French. Johnson, though thoroughly versed in that language, and a professed admirer of Boileau and La Bruyere, did not understand its pronunciation, nor could he speak it himself with propriety. For the rest of the evening the talk was in Latin. Boscovich had a ready current flow of that flimsy phraseology with which a priest may travel through Italy, Spain, and Germany. Johnson scorned what he called colloquial barbarisms.

It was his pride to speak his best. He went on, after a little practice, with as much facility as if it was his native tongue. One sentence this writer well remembers. Observing that Fontenelle at first opposed the Newtonian philosophy, and embraced it afterwards, his words were: *Fontenellus, ni fallor, in extremâ senectute, fuit transfuga ad castra Newtoniana.*

We have now travelled through that part of Dr. Johnson's life which was a perpetual struggle with difficulties. Halcyon days are now to open upon him. In the month of May, 1762, his Majesty, to reward literary merit, signified his pleasure to grant to Johnson a pension of three hundred pounds a year. The Earl of Bute was minister. Lord Loughborough, who, perhaps, was originally a mover in the business, had authority to mention it. He was well acquainted with Johnson; but, having heard much of his independent spirit, and of the downfall of Osborne, the bookseller, he did not know but his benevolence might be rewarded with a folio on his head. He desired the author of these memoirs to undertake the task. This writer thought the opportunity of doing so much good the most happy incident in his life. He went, without delay, to the chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, which, in fact, were the abode of wretchedness. By slow and studied approaches the message was disclosed. Johnson made a long pause: he asked if it was seriously intended? He fell into a profound meditation, and his own definition of a pensioner occurred to him. He was told, "That he, at least, did not come within the definition." He desired to meet next day, and dine at the Mitre Tavern. At that meeting he gave up all his scruples. On the following day Lord Loughborough conducted him to the Earl of Bute. The conversation that passed was in the evening related to this writer by Dr. Johnson. He expressed his sense of his Majesty's bounty, and thought himself the more highly honoured, as the favour was not bestowed on him for having dipped his pen in faction. "No, sir," said Lord Bute, "it is not offered to you for having dipped

your pen in faction, nor with a design that you ever should." Sir John Hawkins will have it, that, after this interview, Johnson was often pressed to wait on Lord Bute, but with a sullen spirit refused to comply. However that be, Johnson was never heard to utter a disrespectful word of that nobleman. The writer of this essay remembers a circumstance which may throw some light on this subject. The late Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, whom Johnson loved and respected, contended for the pre-eminence of the Scotch writers; and Ferguson's book on Civil Society, then on the eve of publication, he said, would give the laurel to North Britain. "Alas! what can he do upon that subject?" said Johnson: "Aristotle, Polybius, Grotius, Puffendorf, and Burlemaqui, have reaped in that field before him." "He will treat it," said Dr. Rose, "in a new manner." "A new manner! Buckinger had no hands, and he wrote his name with his toes at Charing-cross, for half a crown a piece; that was a new manner of writing!" Dr. Rose replied, "If that will not satisfy you, I will name a writer, whom you must allow to be the best in the kingdom." "Who is that?" "The Earl of Bute, when he wrote an order for your pension." "There, sir," said Johnson, "you have me in the toil: to Lord Bute I must allow whatever praise you claim for him." Ingratitude was no part of Johnson's character.

Being now in the possession of a regular income, Johnson left his chambers in the Temple, and once more became master of a house in Johnson's-court, Fleet-street. Dr. Levet, his friend and physician in ordinary,* paid his daily visits with assiduity; made tea all the morning, talked what he had to say, and did not expect an answer. Mrs. Williams had her apartment in the house, and entertained her benefactor with more enlarged conversation. Chemistry was part of Johnson's amusement. For this love of experimental philosophy, Sir John Hawkins thinks an apology necessary. He tells us, with great gravity, that curiosity was the only object in view; not an inten-

* See Johnson's epitaph on him, in vol. vi.

tion to grow suddenly rich by the philosopher's stone, or the transmutation of metals. To enlarge his circle, Johnson once more had recourse to a literary club. This was at the Turk's Head, in Gerard-street, Soho, on every Tuesday evening through the year. The members were, besides himself, the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, the late Mr. Topham Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Mr. Chamier, Sir J. Hawkins, and some others. Johnson's affection for Sir Joshua was founded on a long acquaintance, and a thorough knowledge of the virtuous and amiable qualities of that excellent artist. He delighted in the conversation of Mr. Burke. He met him for the first time at Mr. Garrick's several years ago. On the next day he said, "I suppose, Murphy, you are proud of your countryman. CUM TALIS SIT, UTINAM NOSTER ESSET!" From that time his constant observation was, "That a man of sense could not meet Mr. Burke by accident, under a gateway to avoid a shower, without being convinced that he was the first man in England." Johnson felt not only kindness, but zeal and ardour for his friends. He did every thing in his power to advance the reputation of Dr. Goldsmith. He loved him, though he knew his failings, and particularly the leaven of envy, which corroded the mind of that elegant writer, and made him impatient, without disguise, of the praises bestowed on any person whatever. Of this infirmity, which marked Goldsmith's character, Johnson gave a remarkable instance. It happened that he went with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Goldsmith to see the Fantoccini, which were exhibited some years ago in or near the Haymarket. They admired the curious mechanism by which the puppets were made to walk the stage, draw a chair to the table, sit down, write a letter, and perform a variety of other actions, with such dexterity, that *though Nature's journeyman made the men, they imitated humanity* to the astonishment of the spectator. The entertainment being over, the three friends retired to a tavern. Johnson and Sir Joshua talked with pleasure

of what they had seen; and says Johnson, in a tone of admiration, "How the little fellow brandished his spontoon!" "There is nothing in it," replied Goldsmith, starting up with impatience: "give me a spontoon: I can do it as well myself."

Enjoying his amusements at his weekly club, and happy in a state of independence, Johnson gained in the year 1765 another resource, which contributed more than any thing else to exempt him from the solicitudes of life. He was introduced to the late Mr. Thrale and his family. Mrs. Piozzi has related the fact, and it is therefore needless to repeat it in this place. The author of this narrative looks back to the share he had in that business with self-congratulation, since he knows the tenderness which from that time soothed Johnson's cares at Streatham, and prolonged a valuable life. The subscribers to Shakspeare began to despair of ever seeing the promised edition. To acquit himself of this obligation, he went to work unwillingly, but proceeded with vigour.—In the month of October, 1765, Shakspeare was published; and, in a short time after, the University of Dublin sent over a diploma, in honourable terms, creating him a Doctor of Laws. Oxford in eight or ten years afterwards followed the example; and till then Johnson never assumed the title of Doctor. In 1766 his constitution seemed to be in a rapid decline; and that morbid melancholy, which often clouded his understanding, came upon him with a deeper gloom than ever. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale paid him a visit in this situation, and found him on his knees, with Dr. Delap, the rector of Lewes, in Sussex, beseeching God to continue to him the use of his understanding. Mr. Thrale took him to his house at Streatham; and Johnson from that time became a constant resident in the family. He went occasionally to the club in Gerard-street; but his headquarters were fixed at Streatham. An apartment was fitted up for him, and the library was greatly enlarged. Parties were constantly invited from town; and Johnson was every day at an elegant table, with select and polished

company. Whatever could be devised by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale to promote the happiness, and establish the health of their guest, was studiously performed from that time to the end of Mr. Thrale's life. Johnson accompanied the family in all their summer excursions to Brighthelmstone, to Wales, and to Paris. It is but justice to Mr. Thrale to say, that a more ingenuous frame of mind no man possessed. His education at Oxford gave him the habits of a gentleman; his amiable temper recommended his conversation; and the goodness of his heart made him a sincere friend. That he was the patron of Johnson is an honour to his memory.

In petty disputes with contemporary writers, or the wits of the age, Johnson was seldom entangled. A single incident of that kind may not be unworthy of notice, since it happened with a man of great celebrity in his time. A number of friends dined with Garrick on a Christmas-day. Foote was then in Ireland. It was said at table, that the modern Aristophanes (so Foote was called) had been horse-whipped by a Dublin apothecary, for mimicking him on the stage. "I wonder," said Garrick, "that any man should shew so much resentment to Foote; he has a patent for such liberties; nobody ever thought it *worth his while* to quarrel with him in London." "I am glad," said Johnson, "to find that the *man is rising in the world.*" The expression was afterwards repeated to Foote; who, in return, gave out, that he would produce the *Caliban of literature* on the stage. Being informed of this design, Johnson sent word to Foote, "That the theatre being intended for the reformation of vice, he would step from the boxes on the stage, and correct him before the audience." Foote knew the intrepidity of his antagonist, and abandoned the design. No ill-will ensued. Johnson used to say "That for broad-faced mirth, Foote had not his equal."

Dr. Johnson's fame excited the curiosity of the King. His Majesty expressed a desire to see a man of whom extraordinary things were said. Accordingly, the librarian

at Buckingham-house invited Johnson to see that elegant collection of books, at the same time giving a hint of what was intended. His Majesty entered the room; and, among other things, asked the author, "If he meant to give the world any more of his compositions?" Johnson answered, "That he thought he had written enough." "And I should think so too," replied his Majesty, "if you had not written so well."

Though Johnson thought he had written enough, his genius, even in spite of bodily sluggishness, could not lie still. In 1770 we find him entering the lists as a political writer. The flame of discord that blazed throughout the nation on the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, and the final determination of the House of Commons, that Mr. Luttrell was duly elected by 206 votes against 1143, spread a general spirit of discontent. To allay the tumult, Dr. Johnson published "The False Alarm." Mrs. Piozzi informs us, "That this pamphlet was written at her house, between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve on Thursday night." This celerity has appeared wonderful to many, and some have doubted the truth. It may, however, be placed within the bounds of probability. Johnson has observed that there are different methods of composition. Virgil was used to pour out a great number of verses in the morning, and pass the day in retrenching the exuberances, and correcting inaccuracies; and it was Pope's custom to write his first thoughts in his first words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them. Others employ at once memory and invention, and, with little intermediate use of the pen, form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only, when, in their opinion, they have completed them. This last was Johnson's method. He never took his pen in hand till he had well weighed his subject, and grasped in his mind the sentiments, the train of argument, and the arrangement of the whole. As he often thought aloud, he had, perhaps, talked it over to himself. This may account for

that rapidity with which, in general, he dispatched his sheets to the press, without being at the trouble of a fair copy. Whatever may be the logic or eloquence of the "*False Alarm*," the House of Commons have since erased the resolution from the Journals. But whether they have not left materials for a future controversy, may be made a question.

In 1771 he published another tract, on the subject of Falkland Islands. The design was to shew the impropriety of going to war with Spain for an island thrown aside from human use, stormy in winter, and barren in summer. For this work it is apparent that materials were furnished by direction of the minister.

At the approach of the general election in 1774, he wrote a short discourse, called "The Patriot," not with any visible application to Mr. Wilkes; but to teach the people to reject the leaders of opposition, who called themselves patriots. In 1775 he undertook a pamphlet of more importance, namely, "Taxation no Tyranny, in answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress." The scope of the argument was, that distant colonies, which had in their assemblies a legislature of their own, were, notwithstanding, liable to be taxed in a British parliament, where they had neither peers in one house, nor representatives in the other. He was of opinion that this country was strong enough to enforce obedience. "When an Englishman," he says, "is told that the Americans shoot up like the hydra, he naturally considers how the hydra was destroyed." The event has shewn how much he and the minister of that day were mistaken.

The Account of the Tour to the Western Islands of Scotland, which was undertaken in the autumn of 1773, in company with Mr. Boswell, was not published till some time in the year 1775. This book has been variously received; by some extolled for the elegance of the narrative, and the depth of observation on life and manners; by others, as much condemned, as a work of avowed hostility to the Scotch nation. The praise was, beyond all ques-

tion, fairly deserved; and the censure, on due examination, will appear hasty and ill-founded. That Johnson entertained some prejudices against the Scotch, must not be dissembled. It is true, as Mr. Boswell says, "*that he thought their success in England exceeded their proportion of real merit, and he could not but see in them that nationality which no liberal-minded Scotsman will deny.*" The author of these memoirs well remembers, that Johnson one day asked him, "Have you observed the difference between your own country impudence and Scottish impudence?" The answer being in the negative: "Then I will tell you," said Johnson. "The impudence of an Irishman is the impudence of a fly, that buzzes about you, and you put it away, but it returns again, and flutters and teazes you. The impudence of a Scotsman is the impudence of a leech, that fixes and sucks your blood." Upon another occasion, this writer went with him into the shop of Davies, the bookseller, in Russell-street, Covent-garden. Davies came running to him almost out of breath with joy: "The Scots gentleman is come, sir; his principal wish is to see you; he is now in the back-parlour." "Well, well, I'll see the gentleman," said Johnson. He walked towards the room. Mr. Boswell was the person. This writer followed with no small curiosity. "I find," said Mr. Boswell, "that I am come to London at a bad time, when great popular prejudice has gone forth against us North Britons; but when I am talking to you, I am talking to a large and liberal mind, and you know that I cannot *help coming from Scotland.*" "Sir," said Johnson, "no more can the rest of your countrymen."*

He had other reasons that helped to alienate him from the natives of Scotland. Being a cordial well-wisher to the constitution in church and state, he did not think that Calvin and John Knox were proper founders of a national religion. He made, however, a wide distinction between the Dissenters of Scotland and the Separatists of England.

* Mr. Boswell's account of this introduction is very different from the above. See his Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 360, 8vo. edit. 1804.

To the former he imputed no disaffection, no want of loyalty. Their soldiers and their officers had shed their blood with zeal and courage in the service of Great Britain; and the people, he used to say, were content with their own established modes of worship, without wishing, in the present age, to give any disturbance to the church of England. This he was at all times ready to admit; and therefore declared, that whenever he found a Scotchman to whom an Englishman was as a Scotchman, that Scotchman should be as an Englishman to him. In this, surely, there was no rancour, no malevolence. The Dissenters on this side the Tweed appeared to him in a different light. Their religion, he frequently said, was too worldly, too political, too restless and ambitious. The doctrine of *cashiering* kings, and erecting on the ruins of the constitution a new form of government, which lately issued from their pulpits, he always thought was, under a calm disguise, the principle that lay lurking in their hearts. He knew that a wild democracy had overturned kings, lords, and commons; and that a set of republican fanatics, who would not bow at the name of JESUS, had taken possession of all the livings and all the parishes in the kingdom. That those scenes of horrour might never be renewed, was the ardent wish of Dr. Johnson; and, though he apprehended no danger from Scotland, it is probable that his dislike of Calvinism mingled sometimes with his reflections on the natives of that country. The association of ideas could not be easily broken; but it is well known that he loved and respected many gentlemen from that part of the island. Dr. Robertson's History of Scotland, and Dr. Beattie's Essays, were subjects of his constant praise. Mr. Boswell, Dr. Rose of Chiswick, Andrew Millar, Mr. Hamilton the printer, and the late Mr. Strahan, were among his most intimate friends. Many others might be added to the list. He scorned to enter Scotland as a spy; though Hawkins, his biographer, and the professing defender of his fame, allowed himself leave to represent him in that ignoble character. He

went into Scotland to survey men and manners. Antiquities, fossils, and minerals, were not within his province. He did not visit that country to settle the station of Roman camps, or the spot where Galgacus fought the last battle for public liberty. The people, their customs, and the progress of literature, were his objects. The civilities which he received in the course of his tour have been repaid with grateful acknowledgment, and, generally, with great elegance of expression. His crime is, that he found the country bare of trees, and he has stated the fact. This, Mr. Boswell, in his Tour to the Hebrides, has told us, was resented by his countrymen with anger inflamed to rancour; but he admits that there are few trees on the east side of Scotland. Mr. Pennant, in his Tour, says, that in some parts of the eastern side of the country, he saw several large plantations of pine planted by gentlemen near their seats; and in this respect such a laudable spirit prevails, that, *in another half century*, it never shall be said, "*To spy the nakedness of the land are you come.*" Johnson could not wait for that half century, and therefore mentioned things as he found them. If in any thing he has been mistaken, he has made a fair apology in the last paragraph of his book, avowing with candour, "That he may have been surprized by modes of life, and appearances of nature, that are familiar to men of wider survey, and more varied conversation. Novelty and ignorance must always be reciprocal; and he is conscious that his thoughts on national manners are the thoughts of one who has seen but little."

The Poems of Ossian made a part of Johnson's inquiry during his residence in Scotland and the Hebrides. On his return to England, November 1773, a storm seemed to be gathering over his head; but the cloud never burst, and the thunder never fell.—Ossian, it is well known, was presented to the public as a translation from the *Earse;* but that this was a fraud, Johnson declared without hesitation. "The *Earse*," he says, "was always oral only, and never a written language. The Welsh and the

Irish were more cultivated. In *Earse*, there was not in the world a single manuscript a hundred years old. Martin, who in the last century published an account of the Western Islands, mentions *Irish*, but never *Earse* manuscripts, to be found in the islands in his time. The bards could not read; if they could, they might probably have written. But the bard was a barbarian among barbarians, and, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more. If there is a manuscript from which the translation was made, in what age was it written, and where is it? If it was collected from oral recitation, it could only be in detached parts and scattered fragments: the whole is too long to be remembered. Who put it together in its present form?" For these, and such like reasons, Johnson calls the whole an imposture. He adds, "The editor, or author, never could shew the original, nor can it be shewn by any other. To revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt." This reasoning carries with it great weight. It roused the resentment of Mr. Macpherson. He sent a threatening letter to the author; and Johnson answered him in the rough phrase of stern defiance. The two heroes frowned at a distance, but never came to action.

In the year 1777, the misfortunes of Dr. Dodd excited his compassion. He wrote a speech for that unhappy man, when called up to receive judgment of death; besides two petitions, one to the King, and another to the Queen; and a sermon to be preached by Dodd to the convicts in Newgate. It may appear trifling to add, that about the same time he wrote a prologue to the comedy of "A Word to the Wise," written by Hugh Kelly. The play, some years before, had been damned by a party on the first night. It was revived for the benefit of the author's widow. Mrs. Piozzi relates, that when Johnson was rallied for these exertions, so close to one another, his answer was,

When they come to me with a dying parson, and a dead stay-maker, what can a man do?

We come now to the last of his literary labours. At the request of the booksellers he undertook "The Lives of the Poets." The first publication was in 1779, and the whole was completed in 1781. In a memorandum of that year he says, some time in March he finished the Lives of the Poets, which he wrote in his usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work, yet working with vigour and haste. In another place, he hopes they are written in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety. That the history of so many men, who, in their different degrees, made themselves conspicuous in their time, was not written recently after their deaths, seems to be an omission that does no honour to the Republic of Letters. Their contemporaries in general looked on with calm indifference, and suffered Wit and Genius to vanish out of the world in total silence, unregarded and unlamented. Was there no friend to pay the tribute of a tear? No just observer of life to record the virtues of the deceased? Was even Envy silent? It seemed to have been agreed, that if an author's works survived, the history of the man was to give no moral lesson to after ages. If tradition told us that BEN JONSON went to the Devil Tavern; that SHAKSPEARE stole deer, and held the stirrup at playhouse doors; that DRYDEN frequented Button's Coffeehouse; curiosity was lulled asleep, and Biography forgot the best part of her function, which is to instruct mankind by examples taken from the school of life. This task remained for Dr. Johnson, when years had rolled away; when the channels of information were, for the most part, choaked up, and little remained besides doubtful anecdote, uncertain tradition, and vague report.

"Nunc situs informis premit et deserta Vetustas."

The value of Biography has been better understood in other ages, and in other countries. Tacitus informs us, that to record the lives and characters of illustrious men

was the practice of the Roman authors, in the early periods of the republic. In France the example has been followed. *Fontenelle, D'Alembert*, and *Monsieur Thomas*, have left models in this kind of composition. They have *embalmed* the dead. But it is true, that they had incitements and advantages, even at a distant day, which could not, by any diligence, be obtained by Dr. Johnson. The wits of France had ample materials. They lived in a nation of critics, who had at heart the honour done to their country by their poets, their heroes, and their philosophers. They had, besides, an *Academy of Belles Lettres*, where genius was cultivated, refined, and encouraged. They had the tracts, the essays, and dissertations, which remain in the Mémoires of the Academy, and they had the speeches of the several members, delivered at their first admission to a seat in that learned assembly. In those speeches the new academician did ample justice to the memory of his predecessor; and though his harangue was decorated with the colours of eloquence, and was, for that reason, called panegyric, yet being pronounced before qualified judges, who knew the talents, the conduct, and morals of the deceased, the speaker could not, with propriety, wander into the regions of fiction. The truth was known before it was adorned. The academy saw the marble before the artist polished it. But this country has had no Academy of Literature. The public mind, for centuries, has been engrossed by party and faction; *by the madness of many for the gain of a few;* by civil wars, religious dissentions, trade and commerce, and the arts of accumulating wealth. Amidst such attentions, who can wonder that cold praise has been often the only reward of merit? In this country, Doctor Nathaniel Hodges, who, like the good Bishop of Marseilles, *drew purer breath* amidst the contagion of the plague in London, and during the whole time continued in the city, administering medical assistance, was suffered, as Johnson used to relate with tears in his eyes, to die for debt in a gaol. In this country, the man who brought the New

River to London was ruined by that noble project; and in this country, Otway died for want on Tower-hill; Butler, the great author of Hudibras, whose name can only die with the English language, was left to languish in poverty, the particulars of his life almost unknown, and scarce a vestige of him left except his immortal poem. Had there been an Academy of Literature, the lives, at least, of those celebrated persons would have been written for the benefit of posterity. Swift, it seems, had the idea of such an institution, and proposed it to Lord Oxford; but Whig and Tory were more important objects. It is needless to dissemble, that Dr. Johnson, in the Life of Roscommon, talks of the inutility of such a project. "In this country," he says, "an Academy could be expected to do but little. If an academician's place were profitable, it would be given by interest; if attendance were gratuitous, it would be rarely paid, and no man would endure the least disgust. Unanimity is impossible, and debate would separate the assembly." To this it may be sufficient to answer, that the Royal Society has not been dissolved by sullen disgust; and the modern academy at Somerset-house has already performed much, and promises more. Unanimity is not necessary to such an assembly. On the contrary, by difference of opinion, and collision of sentiment, the cause of literature would thrive and flourish. The true principles of criticism, the secret of fine writing, the investigation of antiquities, and other interesting subjects, might occasion a clash of opinions; but in that contention truth would receive illustration, and the essays of the several members would supply the memoirs of the academy. "But," says Dr. Johnson, "suppose the philological decree made and promulgated, what would be its authority? In absolute government there is sometimes a general reverence paid to all that has the sanction of power, the countenance of greatness. How little this is the state of our country needs not to be told. The edicts of an English academy would probably be read by many, only that they may be sure to disobey them.

The present manners of the nation would deride authority, and therefore nothing is left, but that every writer should criticize himself." This surely is not conclusive. It is by the standard of the best writers that every man settles for himself his plan of legitimate composition; and since the authority of superiour genius is acknowledged, that authority, which the individual obtains, would not be lessened by an association with others of distinguished ability. It may, therefore, be inferred, that an Academy of Literature would be an establishment highly useful, and an honour to Literature. In such an institution profitable places would not be wanted. *Vatis avarus haud facile est animus;* and the minister, who shall find leisure from party and faction to carry such a scheme into execution, will, in all probability, be respected by posterity as the Mæcenas of letters.

We now take leave of Dr. Johnson as an author. Four volumes of his Lives of the Poets were published in 1778, and the work was completed in 1781. Should biography fall again into disuse, there will not always be a Johnson to look back through a century, and give a body of critical and moral instruction. In April, 1781, he lost his friend Mr. Thrale. His own words, in his diary, will best tell that melancholy event. "On Wednesday, the 11th of April, was buried my dear friend Mr. Thrale, who died on Wednesday, the 4th, and with him were buried many of my hopes and pleasures. About five, I think, on Wednesday morning he expired. I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked for the last time upon the face, that, for fifteen years before, had never been turned upon me but with respect and benignity. Farewell: may God, that delighteth in mercy, have *had* mercy on thee! I had constantly prayed for him before his death. The decease of him, from whose friendship I had obtained many opportunities of amusement, and to whom I turned my thoughts as to a refuge from misfortunes, has left me heavy. But my business is with myself."—From the close of his last work, the malady that persecuted him through

life came upon him with alarming severity, and his constitution declined apace. In 1782 his old friend Levet expired without warning and without a groan. Events like these reminded Johnson of his own mortality. He continued his visits to Mrs. Thrale, at Streatham, to the 7th day of October, 1782, when, having first composed a prayer for the happiness of a family with whom he had for many years enjoyed the pleasures and comforts of life, he removed to his own house in town. He says he was up early in the morning, and read fortuitously in the Gospel, *which was his parting use of the library.* The merit of the family is manifested by the sense he had of it, and we see his heart overflowing with gratitude. He leaves the place with regret, and *casts a lingering look behind.*

The few remaining occurrences may be soon dispatched. In the month of June, 1783, Johnson had a paralytic stroke, which affected his speech only. He wrote to Dr. Taylor, of Westminster; and to his friend Mr. Allen, the printer, who lived at the next door. Dr. Brocklesby arrived in a short time, and by his care, and that of Dr. Heberden, Johnson soon recovered. During his illness the writer of this narrative visited him, and found him reading Dr. Watson's Chemistry. Articulating with difficulty, he said, "From this book, he who knows nothing may learn a great deal; and he who knows, will be pleased to find his knowledge recalled to his mind in a manner highly pleasing." In the month of August he set out for Lichfield, on a visit to Mrs. Lucy Porter, the daughter of his wife by her first husband; and in his way back paid his respects to Dr. Adams, at Oxford. Mrs. Williams died at his house in Bolt-court, in the month of September, during his absence. This was another shock to a mind like his, ever agitated by the thoughts of futurity. The contemplation of his own approaching end was constantly before his eyes; and the prospect of death, he declared, was terrible. For many years, when he was not disposed to enter into the conversation going forward,

whoever sat near his chair, might hear him repeating, from Shakspeare,

> Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
> To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
> This sensible warm motion to become
> A kneaded clod, and the delighted spirit
> To bathe in fiery floods———

And from Milton,

> Who would lose,
> For fear of pain, this intellectual being?

By the death of Mrs. Williams he was left in a state of destitution, with nobody but Frank, his black servant, to sooth his anxious moments. In November, 1783, he was swelled from head to foot with a dropsy. Dr. Brocklesby, with that benevolence with which he always assists his friends, paid his visits with assiduity. The medicines prescribed were so efficacious, that in a few days, Johnson, while he was offering up his prayers, was suddenly obliged to rise, and, in the course of the day, discharged twenty pints of water.

Johnson, being eased of his dropsy, began to entertain hopes that the vigour of his constitution was not entirely broken. For the sake of conversing with his friends, he established a conversation club, to meet on every Wednesday evening; and, to serve a man whom he had known in Mr. Thrale's household for many years, the place was fixed at his house in Essex-street, near the Temple. To answer the malignant remarks of Sir John Hawkins on this subject, were a wretched waste of time. Professing to be Johnson's friend, that biographer has raised more objections to his character, than all the enemies of that excellent man. Sir John had a root of bitterness that *put rancours in the vessel of his peace.* Fielding, he says, was the inventor of a cant phrase, *Goodness of heart, which means little more than the virtue of a horse or a dog.* He should have known that kind affections are the essence of virtue: they are the will of God implanted in our nature, to aid and strengthen moral obligation; they incite to action; a sense of benevolence is no less necessary than a

sense of duty. Good affections are an ornament not only to an author but to his writings. He who shews himself upon a cold scent for opportunities to bark and snarl throughout a volume of six hundred pages, may, if he will, pretend to moralize; but GOODNESS OF HEART, or, to use that politer phrase, the *virtue of a horse or a dog*, would redound more to his honour. But Sir John is no more: our business is with Johnson. The members of his club were respectable for their rank their talents, and their literature. They attended with punctuality till about Midsummer, 1784, when, with some appearance of health, Johnson went into Derbyshire, and thence to Lichfield. While he was in that part of the world, his friends in town were labouring for his benefit. The air of a more southern climate they thought might prolong a valuable life. But a pension of 300*l.* a year was a slender fund for a travelling valetudinarian, and it was not then known that he had saved a moderate sum of money. Mr. Boswell and Sir Joshua Reynolds undertook to solicit the patronage of the chancellor. With Lord Thurlow, while he was at the bar, Johnson was well acquainted. He was often heard to say, "Thurlow is a man of such vigour of mind, that I never knew I was to meet him but—I was going to say, I was afraid, but that would not be true, for I never was afraid of any man; but I never knew that I was to meet Thurlow, but I knew I had something to encounter." The chancellor undertook to recommend Johnson's case; but without success. To protract if possible the days of a man, whom he respected, he offered to advance the sum of five hundred pounds. Being informed of this at Lichfield, Johnson wrote the following letter:

MY LORD,

"AFTER a long and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty, so liberally bestowed, I should gladly receive, if my condition made it

necessary; for to such a mind who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that, if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians: and I was very desirous that your lordship should be told it by Sir Joshua Reynolds as an event very uncertain; for, if I grew much better, I should not be willing; if much worse, I should not be able to migrate. Your lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet, as I have had no long time to brood hopes, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and from your lordship's kindness I have received a benefit which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall now live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit.

"I am, my Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obliged,

"most grateful,

"and most humble servant,

"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

"September, 1784."

We have in this instance the exertion of two congenial minds; one, with a generous impulse relieving merit in distress; and the other, by gratitude and dignity of sentiment rising to an equal elevation.

It seems, however, that greatness of mind is not confined to greatness of rank. Dr. Brocklesby was not content to assist with his medical art; he resolved to *minister* to his patient's *mind*, and *pluck from his memory the sorrow* which the late refusal from a high quarter might occasion. To enable him to visit the south of France in pursuit of health, he offered from his own funds an annuity

of one hundred pounds, payable quarterly. This was a *sweet oblivious antidote*, but it was not accepted, for the reasons assigned to the chancellor. The proposal, however, will do honour to Dr. Brocklesby, as long as liberal sentiment shall be ranked among the social virtues.

In the month of October, 1784, we find Dr. Johnson corresponding with Mr. Nichols, the intelligent compiler of the Gentleman's Magazine, and, in the languor of sickness, still desirous to contribute all in his power to the advancement of science and useful knowledge. He says, in a letter to that gentleman, dated Lichfield, October 20, that he should be glad to give so skilful a lover of antiquities any information. He adds, "At Ashburne, where I had very little company, I had the luck to borrow Mr. Bowyer's Life, a book so full of contemporary history, that a literary man must find some of his old friends. I thought that I could now and then have told you some hints worth your notice: we, perhaps, may talk a life over. I hope we shall be much together. You must now be to me what you were before, and what dear Mr. Allen was besides. He was taken unexpectedly away, but I think he was a very good man. I have made very little progress in recovery. I am very weak, and very sleepless; but I live on, and hope."

In that languid condition he arrived, on the 16th of November, at his house in Bolt-court, there to end his days. He laboured with the dropsy and an asthma. He was attended by Dr. Heberden, Dr. Warren, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikshank, the eminent surgeon. Eternity presented to his mind an aweful prospect, and, with as much virtue as perhaps ever is the lot of man, he shuddered at the thought of his dissolution. His friends awakened the comfortable reflection of a well-spent life; and, as his end drew near, they had the satisfaction of seeing him composed, and even cheerful, insomuch, that he was able, in the course of his restless nights, to make translations of Greek epigrams from the Anthologia; and to compose a Latin epitaph for his father, his

mother, and his brother Nathaniel. He meditated, at the same time, a Latin inscription to the memory of Garrick; but his vigour was exhausted.

His love of literature was a passion that stuck to his last sand. Seven days before his death he wrote the following letter to his friend, Mr. Nichols.

"SIR,

"THE late learned Mr. Swinton, of Oxford, having one day remarked that one man, meaning, I suppose, no man but himself, could assign all the parts of the Ancient Universal History to their proper authors, at the request of Sir Robert Chambers, or myself, gave the account which I now transmit to you in his own hand, being willing that of so great a work the history should be known, and that each writer should receive his due proportion of praise from posterity.

"I recommend to you to preserve this scrap of literary intelligence in Mr. Swinton's own hand, or to deposit it in the Museum,* that the veracity of this account may never be doubted.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

Dec. 6, 1784. "SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Swinton.

The History of the Carthaginians.
——————— Numidians.
——————— Mauritanians.
——————— Gætulians.
——————— Garamantes.
——————— Melano Gætulians.
——————— Nigritæ.
——————— Cyrenaica.
——————— Marmarica.
——————— Regio Syrtica.
——————— Turks, Tartars, and Moguls.

* It is there deposited. J. N.

The History of the Indians.
——————————— Chinese.
The Dissertation on the Peopling of America.
The Dissertation on the Independency of the Arabs.
The Cosmogony, and a small part of the History immediately following. By Mr. Sale.
To the Birth of Abraham. Chiefly by Mr. Shelvock.
History of the Jews, Gauls, and Spaniards. By Mr. Psalmanazar.
Xenophon's Retreat. By the same.
History of the Persians, and the Constantinopolitan Empire. By Dr. Campbell.
History of the Romans. By Mr. Bower.*

On the morning of Dec. 7, Dr. Johnson requested to see Mr. Nichols. A few days before, he had borrowed some of the early volumes of the Magazine, with a professed intention to point out the pieces which he had written in that collection. The books lay on the table, with many leaves doubled down, and in particular those which contained his share in the Parliamentary Debates. Such was the goodness of Johnson's heart, that he then declared, that "those debates were the only parts of his writings which gave him any compunction: but that at the time he wrote them he had no conception that he was imposing upon the world, though they were frequently written from very slender materials, and often from none at all, the mere coinage of his own imagination." He

* Before this authentic communication, Mr. Nichols had given in the volume of the Gentleman's Magazine for 1781, p. 370, the following account of the Universal History. The proposals were published October 6, 1729; and the authors of the first seven volumes were,

Vol. I. Mr. Sale, translator of the Koran.
II. George Psalmanazar.
III. George Psalmanazar.
Archibald Bower.
Captain Shelvock.
Dr. Campbell.
IV. The same as vol. III.
V. Mr. Bower.
VI. Mr. Bower.
Rev. John Swinton.
VII. Mr. Swinton.
Mr. Bower.

added, "that he never wrote any part of his work with equal velocity. Three columns of the Magazine in an hour," he said, "was no uncommon effort; which was faster than most persons could have transcribed that quantity. In one day in particular, and that not a very long one, he wrote twelves pages, more in quantity than ever he wrote at any other time, except in the Life of Savage, of which forty-eight pages in octavo were the production of one long day, including a part of the night."

In the course of the conversation he asked whether any of the family of Faden, the printer, were living. Being told that the geographer near Charing-cross was Faden's son, he said, after a short pause, "I borrowed a guinea of his father near thirty years ago; be so good as to take this, and pay it for me."

Wishing to discharge every duty and every obligation, Johnson recollected another debt of ten pounds, which he had borrowed from his friend Mr. Hamilton, the printer, about twenty years before. He sent the money to Mr. Hamilton at his house in Bedford-row, with an apology for the length of time. The Reverend Mr. Strahan was the bearer of the message, about four or five days before Johnson breathed his last.

Mr. Sastres (whom Dr. Johnson esteemed and mentioned in his will) entered the room during his illness. Dr. Johnson, as soon as he saw him, stretched forth his hand, and in a tone of lamentation, called out, JAM MORITURUS! But the love of life was still in active principle. Feeling himself swelled with the dropsy, he conceived that, by incisions in his legs, the water might be discharged. Mr. Cruikshank apprehended that a mortification might be the consequence; but, to appease a distempered fancy, he gently lanced the surface. Johnson cried out, "Deeper, deeper! I want length of life, and you are afraid of giving me pain, which I do not value."

On the eighth of December, the Reverend Mr. Strahan drew his will, by which, after a few legacies, the residue, amounting to about fifteen hundred pounds, was be-

queathed to Frank, the black servant, formerly consigned to the testator by his friend Dr. Bathurst.

The history of a death-bed is painful. Mr. Strahan informs us, that the strength of religion prevailed against the infirmity of nature; and his foreboding dread of the Divine Justice subsided into a pious trust and humble hope of mercy at the throne of grace. On Monday, the 13th day of December (the last of his existence on this side the grave), the desire of life returned with all its former vehemence. He still imagined, that, by puncturing his legs, relief might be obtained. At eight in the morning he tried the experiment, but no water followed. In an hour or two after, he fell into a doze, and about seven in the evening expired without a groan.

On the 20th of the month his remains, with due solemnities, and a numerous attendance of his friends, were buried in Westminster Abbey, near the foot of Shakspeare's monument, and close to the grave of the late Mr. Garrick. The funeral service was read by his friend Dr. Taylor.

A black marble over his grave has the following inscription:

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
obiit XIII die Decembris,
Anno Domini
MDCCLXXXIV.
Ætatis suæ LXXV.

If we now look back, as from an eminence, to view the scenes of life, and the literary labours in which Dr. Johnson was engaged, we may be able to delineate the features of the man, and to form an estimate of his genius.

As a man, Dr. Johnson stands displayed in open daylight. Nothing remains undiscovered. Whatever he said is known; and without allowing him the usual privilege of hazarding sentiments, and advancing positions, for mere amusement, or the pleasure of discussion, Criticism has endeavoured to make him answerable for what, perhaps,

he never seriously thought. His Diary, which has been printed, discovers still more. We have before us the very heart of the man, with all his inward consciousness. And yet, neither in the open paths of life, nor in his secret recesses, has any one vice been discovered. We see him reviewing every year of his life, and severely censuring himself, for not keeping resolutions, which morbid melancholy, and other bodily infirmities, rendered impracticable. We see him for every little defect imposing on himself voluntary penance, going through the day with only one cup of tea without milk, and to the last, amidst paroxysms and remissions of illness, forming plans of study and resolutions to amend his life.* Many of his scruples may be called weaknesses; but they are the weaknesses of a good, a pious, and most excellent man.

His person, it is well known, was large and unwieldy. His nerves were affected by that disorder, for which, at two years of age, he was presented to the royal touch. His head shook, and involuntary motions made it uncertain that his legs and arms would, even at a tea-table, remain in their proper place. A person of Lord Chesterfield's delicacy might in his company be in a fever. He would sometimes of his own accord do things inconsistent with the established modes of behaviour. Sitting at table with the celebrated Mrs. Cholmondeley, who exerted herself to circulate the subscription for Shakspeare, he took hold of her hand in the middle of dinner, and held it close to his eye, wondering at the delicacy and the whiteness, till with a smile she asked, *Will he give it to me again when he has done with it?* The exteriors of politeness did not belong to Johnson. Even that civility which proceeds, or ought to proceed, from the mind, was sometimes violated. His morbid melancholy had an effect on his temper; his passions were irritable; and the pride of science, as well as of a fierce independent spirit, inflamed him on some occasions above all bounds of moderation. Though not in the shade of academic bowers, he led a

* On the subject of voluntary penance see the Rambler, No. 110.

scholastic life; and the habit of pronouncing decisions to his friends and visitors gave him a dictatorial manner, which was much enforced by a voice naturally loud, and often overstretched. Metaphysical discussion, moral theory, systems of religion, and anecdotes of literature, were his favourite topics. General history had little of his regard. Biography was his delight. *The proper study of mankind is man.* Sooner than hear of the Punic war, he would be rude to the person that introduced the subject.

Johnson was born a logician; one of those, to whom only books of logic are said to be of use. In consequence of his skill in that art, he loved argumentation. No man thought more profoundly, nor with such acute discernment. A fallacy could not stand before him; it was sure to be refuted by strength of reasoning, and a precision both in idea and expression almost unequalled. When he chose by apt illustration to place the argument of his adversary in a ludicrous light, one was almost inclined to think *ridicule the test of truth.* He was surprized to be told, but it is certainly true, that, with great powers of mind, wit and humour were his shining talents. That he often argued for the sake of a triumph over his adversary, cannot be dissembled. Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, has been heard to tell of a friend of his, who thanked him for introducing him to Dr. Johnson, as he had been convinced, in the course of a long dispute, that an opinion, which he had embraced as a settled truth, was no better than a vulgar errour. This being reported to Johnson, "Nay," said he, "do not let him be thankful, for he was right, and I was wrong." Like his uncle Andrew, in the ring at Smithfield, Johnson, in a circle of disputants, was determined *neither to be thrown nor conquered.* Notwithstanding all his piety, self-government, or the command of his passions in conversation, does not seem to have been among his attainments. Whenever he thought the contention was for the superiority, he has been known to break out with violence, and even ferocity. When the

fray was over, he generally softened into repentance, and, by conciliating measures, took care that no animosity should be left rankling in the breast of his antagonist. Of this defect he seems to have been conscious. In a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he says, "Poor Baretti! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank and manly, and independent, and, perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To be frank, he thinks, is to be cynical; and to be independent is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest lady, the rather, because of his misbehaviour I am afraid he learned part of me. I hope to set him hereafter a better example." For his own intolerant and overbearing spirit he apologized, by observing, that it had done some good; obscenity and impiety were repressed in his company.

It was late in life before he had the habit of mixing, otherwise than occasionally, with polite company. At Mr. Thrale's he saw a constant succession of well-accomplished visitors. In that society he began to wear off the rugged points of his own character. He saw the advantages of mutual civility, and endeavoured to profit by the models before him. He aimed at what has been called by Swift the *lesser morals*, and by Cicero *minores virtutes*. His endeavour, though new and late, gave pleasure to all his acquaintance. Men were glad to see that he was willing to be communicative on equal terms and reciprocal complacence. The time was then expected when he was to cease being what George Garrick, brother to the celebrated actor, called him the first time he heard him converse, "A TREMENDOUS COMPANION." He certainly wished to be polite, and even thought himself so; but his civility still retained something uncouth and harsh. His manners took a milder tone, but the endeavour was too palpably seen. He laboured even in trifles. He was a giant gaining a *purchase* to lift a feather.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that in the confines of virtue and great qualities there are generally vices of an opposite nature. In Dr. Johnson not one ingredient can

take the name of vice. From his attainments in literature grew the pride of knowledge; and from his powers of reasoning, the love of disputation and the vain-glory of superiour vigour.—His piety, in some instances, bordered on superstition. He was willing to believe in preternatural agency, and thought it not more strange that there should be evil spirits than evil men. Even the question about second sight held him in suspence. "Second sight," Mr. Pennant tells us, "is a power of seeing images impressed on the organs of sight by the power of fancy, or on the fancy by the disordered spirits operating on the mind. It is the faculty of seeing spectres or visions, which represent an event actually passing at a distance, or likely to happen at a future day. In 1771, a gentleman, the last who was supposed to be possessed of this faculty, had a boat at sea in a tempestuous night, and, being anxious for his freight, suddenly started up, and said his men would be drowned, for he had seen them pass before him with wet garments and drooping locks. The event corresponded with his disordered fancy. And thus," continues Mr. Pennant, "a distempered imagination, clouded with anxiety, may make an impression on the spirits; as persons, restless and troubled with indigestion, see various forms and figures while they lie awake in bed." This is what Dr. Johnson was not willing to reject. He wished for some positive proof of communications with another world. His benevolence embraced the whole race of man, and yet was tinctured with particular prejudices. He was pleased with the minister in the Isle of Sky, and loved him so much that he began to wish him not a Presbyterian. To that body of dissenters his zeal for the established church made him in some degree an adversary: and his attachment to a mixed and limited monarchy led him to declare open war against what he called a sullen republican. He would rather praise a man of Oxford than of Cambridge. He disliked a Whig, and loved a Tory. These were the shades of his character, which it has been the business of certain party-writers to represent in the darkest colours.

Since virtue, or moral goodness, consists in a just conformity of our actions to the relations in which we stand to the Supreme Being and to our fellow-creatures, where shall we find a man who has been, or endeavoured to be, more diligent in the discharge of those essential duties? His first prayer was composed in 1738; he continued those fervent ejaculations of piety to the end of his life. In his Meditations we see him scrutinizing himself with severity, and aiming at perfection unattainable by man. His duty to his neighbour consisted in universal benevolence, and a constant aim at the production of happiness. Who was more sincere and steady in his friendships? It has been said that there was no real affection between him and Garrick. On the part of the latter, there might be some corrosions of jealousy. The character of Prospero, in the Rambler, No. 200, was, beyond all question, occasioned by Garrick's ostentatious display of furniture and Dresden china. It was surely fair to take from this incident a hint for a moral essay; and, though no more was intended, Garrick, we are told, remembered it with uneasiness. He was also hurt that his Lichfield friend did not think so highly of his dramatic art as the rest of the world. The fact was, Johnson could not see the passions as they rose and chased one another in the varied features of that expressive face; and by his own manner of reciting verses, which was wonderfully impressive, he plainly shewed that he thought there was too much of artificial tone and measured cadence in the declamation of the theatre. The present writer well remembers being in conversation with Dr. Johnson near the side of the scenes during the tragedy of King Lear: when Garrick came off the stage, he said, "You two talk so loud, you destroy all my feelings." "Prithee," replied Johnson, "do not talk of feelings; Punch has no feelings." This seems to have been his settled opinion; admirable as Garrick's imitation of nature always was, Johnson thought it no better than mere mimickry. Yet it is certain that he esteemed and loved Garrick; that he dwelt with plea-

sure on his praise; and used to declare, that he deserved his great success, because on all applications for charity he gave more than was asked. After Garrick's death he never talked of him without a tear in his eyes. He offered, if Mrs. Garrick would desire it of him, to be the editor of his works and the historian of his life. It has been mentioned, that on his death-bed he thought of writing a Latin inscription to the memory of his friend. Numbers are still living who know these facts, and still remember with gratitude the friendship which he shewed to them with unaltered affection for a number of years. His humanity and generosity, in proportion to his slender income, were unbounded. It has been truly said, that the lame, the blind, and the sorrowful, found in his house a sure retreat. A strict adherence to truth he considered as a sacred obligation, insomuch that, in relating the most minute anecdote, he would not allow himself the smallest addition to embellish his story. The late Mr. Tyers, who knew Dr. Johnson intimately, observed, "that he always talked as if he was talking upon oath."

After a long acquaintance with this excellent man, and an attentive retrospect to his whole conduct, such is the light in which he appears to the writer of this essay. The following lines of Horace may be deemed his picture in miniature:

Iracundior est paulò, minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum, rideri possit, eò quòd
Rusticius tonso toga defluit, et male laxus
In pede calceus hæret. At est bonus, ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam; at tibi amicus; at ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore.

"Your friend is passionate, perhaps unfit
For the brisk petulance of modern wit.
His hair ill-cut, his robe that aukward flows,
Or his large shoes to raillery expose
The man you love; yet, is he not possess'd
Of virtues, with which very few are blest?
While underneath this rude, uncouth disguise
A genius of extensive knowledge lies."

FRANCIS's HOR. Book i. Sat. 3.

It remains to give a review of Johnson's works; and this, it is imagined, will not be unwelcome to the reader.

Like Milton and Addison, he seems to have been fond of his Latin poetry. Those compositions shew that he was an early scholar; but his verses have not the graceful ease that gave so much suavity to the poems of Addison. The translation of the Messiah labours under two disadvantages; it is first compared with Pope's inimitable performance, and afterwards with the Pollio of Virgil. It may appear trifling to remark, that he has made the letter *o*, in the word *Virgo*, long and short in the same line; VIRGO, VIRGO PARIT.* But the translation has great merit, and some admirable lines. In the odes there is a sweet flexibility, particularly, To his worthy friend, Dr. Laurence; on himself at the theatre, March 8, 1771; the Ode in the Isle of Sky; and that to Mrs. Thrale from the same place.

His English poetry is such as leaves room to think, if he had devoted himself to the Muses, that he would have been the rival of Pope. His first production in this kind was "London," a poem in imitation of the third satire of Juvenal. The vices of the metropolis are placed in the room of ancient manners. The author had heated his mind with the ardour of Juvenal, and, having the skill to polish his numbers, he became a sharp accuser of the times. The "Vanity of Human Wishes," is an imitation of the tenth satire of the same author. Though it is translated by Dryden, Johnson's imitation approaches nearest to the spirit of the original. The subject is taken from the Alcibiades of Plato, and has an intermixture of the sentiments of Socrates concerning the object of prayers offered up to the Deity. The general proposition is, that good and evil are so little understood by mankind, that their wishes, when granted, are always destructive. This is exemplified in a variety of instances, such as riches, state-preferment, eloquence, military glory, long life, and the advantages of form and beauty. Juvenal's conclusion is worthy of a Christian poet, and such a pen as Johnson's.

* Homer has taken a similar liberty in the line commencing
"Αρες, "Αρες Βροτολοιγὲ.—Il. v. 31 and 455.

"Let us," he says, "leave it to the gods to judge what is fittest for us. Man is dearer to his Creator than himself. If we must pray for special favour, let it be for a sound mind in a sound body. Let us pray for fortitude, that we may think the labours of Hercules and all his sufferings preferable to a life of luxury and the soft repose of Sardanapalus. This is a blessing within the reach of every man; this we can give ourselves. It is virtue, and virtue only, that can make us happy." In the translation the zeal of the Christian conspired with the warmth and energy of the poet; but Juvenal is not eclipsed. For the various characters in the original the reader is pleased, in the English poem, to meet with Cardinal Wolsey, Buckingham stabbed by Felton, Lord Strafford, Clarendon, Charles XII. of Sweden; and for Tully and Demosthenes, Lydiat, Galileo, and Archbishop Laud. It is owing to Johnson's delight in biography, that the name of Lydiat is called forth from obscurity. It may, therefore, not be useless to tell, that Lydiat was a learned divine and mathematician in the beginning of the last century. He attacked the doctrine of Aristotle and Scaliger, and wrote a number of sermons on the harmony of the Evangelists. With all his merit, he lay in the prison of *Bocardo* at Oxford, till Bishop Usher, Laud, and others, paid his debts. He petitioned Charles I. to be sent to Ethiopia to procure manuscripts. Having spoken in favour of monarchy and bishops, he was plundered by the Puritans, and twice carried away a prisoner from his rectory. He died very poor in 1646.

The tragedy of "Irene" is founded on a passage in Knolles's History of the Turks; an author highly commended in the Rambler, No. 122. An incident in the Life of Mahomet the Great, first emperor of the Turks, is the hinge on which the fable is made to move. The substance of the story is shortly this:—In 1453 Mahomet laid siege to Constantinople, and having reduced the place, became enamoured of a fair Greek, whose name was Irene. The sultan invited her to embrace the law of the

Prophet, and to grace his throne. Enraged at this intended marriage, the Janizaries formed a conspiracy to dethrone the emperor. To avert the impending danger, Mahomet, in a full assembly of the grandees, " catching with one hand;" as Knolles relates it, " the fair Greek by the hair of her head, and drawing his falchion with the other, he, at one blow, struck off her head, to the great terrour of them all; and, having so done, said unto them, Now, by this, judge whether your emperor is able to bridle his affections or not." The story is simple, and it remained for the author to amplify it with proper episodes, and give it complication and variety. The catastrophe is changed, and horrour gives place to terrour and pity. But, after all, the fable is cold and languid. There is not, throughout the piece, a single situation to excite curiosity, and raise a conflict of passions. The diction is nervous, rich, and elegant; but splendid language, and melodious numbers, will make a fine poem, not a tragedy. The sentiments are beautiful, always happily expressed, but seldom appropriated to the character, and generally too philosophic. What Johnson has said of the tragedy of *Cato* may be applied to Irene: " It is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama; rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections. Nothing excites or assuages emotion. The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care: we consider not what they are doing, nor what they are suffering; we wish only to know what they have to say. It is unaffecting elegance, and chill philosophy." The following speech, in the mouth of a Turk, who is supposed to have heard of the British constitution, has been often selected from the numberless beauties with which " Irene" abounds:

" If there be any land, as fame reports,
Where common laws restrain the prince and subject;
A happy land, where circulating power
Flows through each member of th' embodied state,
Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,

Her grateful sons shine bright with ev'ry virtue;
Untainted with the LUST OF INNOVATION;
Sure all unite to hold her league of rule
Unbroken, as the sacred chain of Nature
That links the jarring elements in peace."

These are British sentiments. Above forty years ago they found an echo in the breast of applauding audiences; and to this hour they are the voice of the people, in defiance of the *metaphysics* and the *new lights* of certain politicians, who would gladly find their private advantage in the disasters of their country; a race of men, *quibus nulla ex honesto spes.*

The prologue to Irene is written with elegance, and, in a peculiar strain, shews the literary pride and lofty spirit of the author. The epilogue, we are told, in a late publication, was written by Sir William Yonge. This is a new discovery, but by no means probable.* When the appendages to a dramatic performance are not assigned to a friend, or an unknown hand, or a person of fashion, they are always supposed to be written by the author of the play. It is to be wished, however, that the epilogue in question could be transferred to any other writer. It is the worst *jeu d'esprit* that ever fell from Johnson's pen.

An account of the various pieces contained in this edition, such as Miscellaneous Tracts, and Philological Dissertations, would lead beyond the intended limits of this Essay. It will suffice to say, that they are the productions of a man who never wanted decorations of language, and always taught his reader to think. The life of the late King of Prussia, as far as it extends, is a model of the biographical style. The Review of "The Origin of Evil" was, perhaps, written with asperity; but the angry epitaph which it provoked from Soame Jenyns, was an ill-timed resentment, unworthy of the genius of that amiable author.

The "Rambler" may be considered as Johnson's great work. It was the basis of that high reputation which went

* "The epilogue, as Johnson informed me, was written by Sir William Yonge."—Boswell's Life, vol. i.

on increasing to the end of his days. The circulation of those periodical essays was not, at first, equal to their merit. The had not, like the Spectators, the art of charming by variety; and indeed how could it be expected? The wits of Queen Anne's reign sent their contributions to the Spectator; and Johnson stood alone. A stage-coach, says Sir Richard Steele, must go forward on stated days, whether there are passengers or not. So it was with the Rambler, every Tuesday and Saturday, for two years. In this collection Johnson is the great moral teacher of his countrymen; his essays form a body of ethics; the observations on life and manners are acute and instructive; and the papers professedly critical, serve to promote the cause of literature. It must, however, be acknowledged, that a settled gloom hangs over the author's mind; and all the essays, except eight or ten, coming from the same fountain-head, no wonder that they have the raciness of the soil from which they sprang. Of this uniformity Johnson was sensible. He used to say, that if he had joined a friend or two, who would have been able to intermix papers of a sprightly turn, the collection would have been more miscellaneous, and by consequence more agreeable to the generality of readers. This he used to illustrate by repeating two beautiful stanzas from his own Ode to Cave, or *Sylvanus Urban:*

Non ulla Musis pagina gratior,
Quam quæ severis ludicra jungere
Novit, fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.

Texente nymphis serta Lycoride,
Rosæ ruborem sic viola adjuvat
Immista, sic Iris refulget
Æthereis variata fucis.

It is remarkable that the pomp of diction, which has been objected to Johnson, was first assumed in the Rambler. His Dictionary was going on at the same time, and, in the course of that work, as he grew familiar with technical and scholastic words, he thought that the bulk of his readers were equally learned; or at

least would admire the splendour and dignity of the style. And yet it is well known, that he praised in Cowley the ease and unaffected structure of the sentences. Cowley may be placed at the head of those who cultivated a clear and natural style. Dryden, Tillotson, and Sir William Temple, followed. Addison, Swift, and Pope, with more correctness, carried our language well nigh to perfection. Of Addison, Johnson was used to say, *He is the Raphael of Essay Writers.* How he differed so widely from such elegant models is a problem not to be solved, unless it be true that he took an early tincture from the writers of the last century, particularly Sir Thomas Browne. Hence the peculiarities of his style, new combinations, sentences of an unusual structure, and words derived from the learned languages. His own account of the matter is, "When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas." But he forgot the observation of Dryden: *If too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed, not to assist the natives, but to conquer them.* There is, it must be admitted, a swell of language, often out of all proportion to the sentiment; but there is, in general, a fulness of mind, and the thought seems to expand with the sound of the words. Determined to discard colloquial barbarisms and licentious idioms, he forgot the elegant simplicity that distinguishes the writings of Addison. He had what Locke calls a round-about view of his subject; and, though he was never tainted, like many modern wits, with the ambition of shining in paradox, he may be fairly called an ORIGINAL THINKER. His reading was extensive. He treasured in his mind whatever was worthy of notice, but he added to it from his own meditation. He collected, *quæ reconderet, auctaque promeret.* Addison was not so profound a thinker. He was *born to write, converse, and live with ease;* and he found an early patron in Lord Somers. He depended, however, more upon a fine taste than the vigour of his

mind. His Latin poetry shews, that he relished, with a just selection, all the refined and delicate beauties of the Roman classics; and, when he cultivated his native language, no wonder that he formed that graceful style, which has been so justly admired; simple, yet elegant; adorned, yet never over-wrought; rich in allusion, yet pure and perspicuous; correct, without labour; and though sometimes deficient in strength, yet always musical. His essays, in general, are on the surface of life; if ever original, it was in pieces of humour. Sir Roger de Coverley, and the Tory Fox-hunter, need not to be mentioned. Johnson had a fund of humour, but he did not know it; nor was he willing to descend to the familiar idiom and the variety of diction which that mode of composition required. The letter, in the Rambler, No. 12, from a young girl that wants a place, will illustrate this observation. Addison possessed an unclouded imagination, alive to the first objects of nature and of art. He reaches the sublime without any apparent effort. When he tells us, "If we consider the fixed stars as so many oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets; if we still discover new firmaments and new lights that are sunk further in those unfathomable depths of æther; we are lost in a labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confounded with the magnificence and immensity of nature; the ease, with which this passage rises to unaffected grandeur, is the secret charm that captivates the reader. Johnson is always lofty; he seems, to use Dryden's phrase, to be "o'erinform'd with meaning," and his words do not appear to himself adequate to his conception. He moves in state, and his periods are always harmonious. His Oriental Tales are in the true style of eastern magnificence, and yet none of them are so much admired as the Visions of Mirza. In matters of criticism, Johnson is never the echo of preceding writers. He thinks and decides for himself. If we except the Essays on the Pleasures of Imagination, Addison cannot be called a philosophical critic. His moral essays are

beautiful: but in that province nothing can exceed the Rambler, though Johnson used to say, that the essay on *The Burthens of Mankind* (in the Spectator, No. 558) was the most exquisite he had ever read. Talking of himself, Johnson said, "Topham Beauclerk has wit, and every thing comes from him with ease; but when I say a good thing, I seem to labour." When we compare him with Addison, the contrast is still stronger. Addison lends grace and ornament to truth; Johnson gives it force and energy. Addison makes virtue amiable; Johnson represents it as an awful duty. Addison insinuates himself with an air of modesty; Johnson commands like a dictator; but a dictator in his splendid robes, not labouring at the plough. Addison is the Jupiter of Virgil, with placid serenity talking to Venus:

"Vultu, quo cœlum tempestatesque serenat."

Johnson is JUPITER TONANS: he darts his lightning, and rolls his thunder, in the cause of virtue and piety. The language seems to fall short of his ideas; he pours along, familiarizing the terms of philosophy with bold inversions, and sonorous periods; but we may apply to him what Pope has said of Homer: "It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it: like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense."

It is not the design of this comparison to decide between these two eminent writers. In matters of taste every reader will choose for himself. Johnson is always profound, and of course gives the fatigue of thinking. Addison charms while he instructs; and writing, as he always does, a pure, an elegant, and idiomatic style, he may be pronounced the safest model for imitation.

The essays written by Johnson in the "Adventurer" may be called a continuation of the Rambler. The "Idler," in order to be consistent with the assumed character, is written with abated vigour, in a style of ease and un-

laboured elegance. It is the Odyssey after the Iliad. Intense thinking would not become the "Idler." The first number presents a well-drawn portrait of an Idler, and from that character no deviation could be made. Accordingly, Johnson forgets his austere manner, and plays us into sense. He still continues his lectures on human life, but he adverts to common occurrences, and is often content with the topic of the day. An advertisement in the beginning of the first volume informs us, that twelve entire essays were a contribution from different hands. One of these, N° 33, is the Journal of a Senior Fellow at Cambridge, but, as Johnson, being himself an original thinker, always revolted from servile imitation, he has printed the piece with an apology, importing that the journal of a citizen in the Spectator almost precluded the attempt of any subsequent writer. This account of the Idler may be closed, after observing, that the author's mother being buried on the 23d of January, 1759, there is an admirable paper occasioned by that event, on Saturday the 27th of the same month, N° 41. The reader, if he pleases, may compare it with another fine paper in the Rambler, N° 54, on the conviction that rushes on the mind at the bed of a dying friend.

"Rasselas," says Sir John Hawkins, "is a specimen of our language scarcely to be paralleled; it is written in a style refined to a degree of *immaculate purity*, and displays the whole force of *turgid* eloquence. One cannot but smile at this encomium. Rasselas is undoubtedly both elegant and sublime. It is a view of human life, displayed, it must be owned, in gloomy colours. The author's natural melancholy, depressed, at the time, by the approaching dissolution of his mother, darkened the picture. A tale, that should keep curiosity awake by the artifice of unexpected incidents, was not the design of a mind pregnant with better things. He, who reads the heads of the chapters, will find, that it is not a course of adventures that invites him forward, but a discussion of interesting questions; Reflections on Human Life; the History of

Imlac, the Man of Learning; a Dissertation upon Poetry; the Character of a wise and happy Man, who discourses with energy on the government of the passions, and on a sudden, when Death deprives him of his daughter, forgets all his maxims of wisdom and the eloquence that adorned them, yielding to the stroke of affliction with all the vehemence of the bitterest anguish. It is by pictures of life, and profound moral reflection, that expectation is engaged and gratified throughout the work. The History of the Mad Astronomer, who imagines that, for five years, he possessed the regulation of the weather, and that the sun passed from tropic to tropic by his direction, represents in striking colours the sad effects of a distempered imagination. It becomes the more affecting when we recollect that it proceeds from one who lived in fear of the same dreadful visitation; from one who says emphatically, "Of the uncertainties in our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason." The inquiry into the cause of madness, and the dangerous prevalence of imagination, till, in time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention, and the mind recurs constantly to the favourite conception, is carried on in a strain of acute observation; but it leaves us room to think that the author was transcribing from his own apprehensions. The discourse on the nature of the soul gives us all that philosophy knows, not without a tincture of superstition. It is remarkable that the vanity of human pursuits was, about the same time, the subject that employed both Johnson and Voltaire; but *Candide* is the work of a lively imagination; and Rasselas, with all its splendour of eloquence, exhibits a gloomy picture. It should, however, be remembered, that the world has known the WEEPING as well as the LAUGHING philosopher.

The Dictionary does not properly fall within the province of this Essay. The preface, however, will be found in this edition. He who reads the close of it, without acknowledging the force of the pathetic and sublime, must

have more insensibility in his composition than usually falls to the share of a man. The work itself, though in some instances abuse has been loud, and in others malice has endeavoured to undermine its fame, still remains the MOUNT ATLAS of English literature.

> Though storms and tempests thunder on its brow,
> And oceans break their billows at its feet,
> It stands unmov'd, and glories in its height.

That Johnson was eminently qualified for the office of a commentator on Shakspeare, no man can doubt; but it was an office which he never cordially embraced. The public expected more than he had diligence to perform; and yet his edition has been the ground on which every subsequent commentator has chosen to build. One note, for its singularity, may be thought worthy of notice in this place. Hamlet says, *For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a God-kissing carrion.* In this Warburton discovered the *origin of evil.* Hamlet, he says, breaks off in the middle of the sentence; but the learned commentator knows what he was going to say, and, being unwilling to keep the secret, he goes on in a train of philosophical reasoning that leaves the reader in astonishment. Johnson, with true piety, adopts the fanciful hypothesis, declaring it to be a noble emendation, which almost sets the critic on a level with the author. The general observations at the end of the several plays, and the preface, will be found in this edition. The former, with great elegance and precision, give a summary view of each drama. The preface is a tract of great erudition and philosophical criticism.

Johnson's political pamphlets, whatever was his motive for writing them, whether gratitude for his pension, or the solicitation of men in power, did not support the cause for which they were undertaken. They are written in a style truly harmonious, and with his usual dignity of language. When it is said that he advanced positions repugnant to the *common rights of mankind*, the virulence of party may be suspected. It is, perhaps, true, that in the clamour

raised throughout the kingdom Johnson overheated his mind; but he was a friend to the rights of man, and he was greatly superiour to the littleness of spirit that might incline him to advance what he did not think and firmly believe. In the "False Alarm," though many of the most eminent men in the kingdom concurred in petitions to the throne, yet Johnson, having well surveyed the mass of the people, has given, with great humour and no less truth, what may be called, *the birth, parentage, and education of a remonstrance.* On the subject of Falkland's islands, the fine dissuasive from too hastily involving the world in the calamities of war, must extort applause even from the party that wished, at that time, for scenes of tumult and commotion. It was in the same pamphlet that Johnson offered battle to Junius; a writer who, by the uncommon elegance of his style, charmed every reader, though his object was to inflame the nation in favour of a faction. Junius fought in the dark; he saw his enemy, and had his full blow; while he himself remained safe in obscurity. But let us not, said Johnson, mistake the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow. The keen invective which he published on that occasion, promised a paper war between two combatants, who knew the use of their weapons. A battle between them was as eagerly expected as between Mendoza and Big Ben. But Junius, whatever was his reason, never returned to the field. He laid down his arms, and has, ever since, remained as secret as the MAN IN THE MASK in Voltaire's History.

The account of his journey to the Hebrides, or Western Isles of Scotland, is a model for such as shall hereafter relate their travels. The author did not visit that part of the world in the character of an antiquary, to amuse us with wonders taken from the dark and fabulous ages; nor as a mathematician, to measure a degree, and settle the longitude and latitude of the several islands. Those, who expected such information, expected what was never intended. *In every work regard the writer's end.* Johnson went to see men and manners, modes of life, and the pro-

gress of civilization. His remarks are so artfully blended with the rapidity and elegance of his narrative, that the reader is inclined to wish, as Johnson did with regard to Gray, that *to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment.*

As to Johnson's Parliamentary Debates, nothing with propriety can be said in this place. They are collected in two volumes by Mr. Stockdale, and the flow of eloquence which runs through the several speeches is sufficiently known.

It will not be useless to mention two more volumes. They contain a set of Sermons left for publication by John Taylor, LL. D. The Reverend Mr. Hayes, who ushered these Discourses into the world, has not given them as the composition of Dr. Taylor. All he could say for his departed friend was, that he left them in silence among his papers. Mr. Hayes knew them to be the production of a superiour mind; and the writer of these Memoirs owes it to the candour of that elegant scholar, that he is now warranted to give an additional proof of Johnson's ardour in the cause of piety, and every moral duty. The last discourse in the collection was intended to be delivered by Dr. Taylor at the funeral of Johnson's wife; but that reverend gentleman declined the office, because, as he told Mr. Hayes, the praise of the deceased was too much amplified. He who reads the piece will find it a beautiful moral lesson, written with temper, and no where overcharged with ambitious ornaments. The rest of the discourses were the fund which Dr. Taylor, from time to time, carried with him to his pulpit. He had the LARGEST BULL* in England, and some of the best sermons.

We come now to the "Lives of the Poets," a work undertaken at the age of seventy, yet the most brilliant, and certainly the most popular, of all our author's writings. For this performance he needed little preparation. Attentive always to the history of letters, and by his own natural bias fond of biography, he was the more willing to

* See Johnson's Letters from Ashborne, in vol. vi. of this edition.

embrace the proposition of the booksellers. He was versed in the whole body of English poetry, and his rules of criticism were settled with precision. The dissertation, in the Life of Cowley, on the metaphysical poets of the last century, has the attraction of novelty as well as sound observation. The writers who followed Dr. Donne, went in quest of something better than truth and nature. As Sancho says, in Don Quixote, they wanted better bread than is made with wheat. They took pains to bewilder themselves, and were ingenious for no other purpose than to err. In Johnson's review of Cowley's Works, false wit is detected in all its shapes, and the gothic taste for glittering conceits, and far-fetched allusions, is exploded, never, it is hoped, to revive again.

An author who has published his observations on the Life and Writings of Dr. Johnson, speaking of the Lives of the Poets, says, "These compositions, abounding in strong and acute remark, and with many fine and even sublime passages, have unquestionably great merit; but if they be regarded merely as containing narrations of the lives, delineations of the characters, and strictures of the several authors, they are far from being always to be depended on." He adds, "The characters are sometimes partial, and there is sometimes TOO MUCH MALIGNITY of misrepresentation, to which, perhaps, may be joined no inconsiderable portion of erroneous criticism." The several clauses of this censure deserve to be answered as fully as the limits of this Essay will permit.

In the first place, the facts are related upon the best intelligence, and the best vouchers that could be gleaned, after a great lapse of time. Probability was to be inferred from such materials as could be procured, and no man better understood the nature of historical evidence than Dr. Johnson; no man was more religiously an observer of truth. If his History is any where defective, it must be imputed to the want of better information, and the errours of uncertain tradition.

Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura.

If the strictures on the works of the various authors are not always satisfactory, and if erroneous criticism may sometimes be suspected, who can hope that in matters of taste all shall agree?

The instances in which the public mind has differed from the positions advanced by the author, are few in number. It has been said, that justice has not been done to Swift; that Gay and Prior are undervalued; and that Gray has been harshly treated. This charge, perhaps, ought not to be disputed. Johnson, it is well known, had conceived a prejudice against Swift. His friends trembled for him when he was writing that life, but were pleased, at last, to see it executed with temper and moderation. As to Prior, it is probable that he gave his real opinion, but an opinion that will not be adopted by men of lively fancy. With regard to Gray, when he condemns the apostrophe, in which Father Thames is desired to tell who drives the hoop, or tosses the ball, and then adds, that Father Thames had no better means of knowing than himself; when he compares the abrupt beginning of the first stanza of the bard to the ballad of "Johnny Armstrong," "*Is there ever a man in all Scotland;*" there are, perhaps, few friends of Johnson, who would not wish to blot out both the passages.

It may be questioned whether the remarks on Pope's Essay on Man can be received without great caution. It has been already mentioned, that Crousaz, a professor in Switzerland, eminent for his Treatise of Logic, started up a professed enemy to that poem. Johnson says, "his mind was one of those, in which philosophy and piety are happily united. He looked with distrust upon all metaphysical systems of theology, and was persuaded, that the positions of Pope were intended to draw mankind away from Revelation, and to represent the whole course of things as a necessary concatenation of indissoluble fatality." This is not the place for a controversy about the Leibnitzian system. Warburton, with all the powers of his large and comprehensive mind, published a Vindication of Pope; and yet Johnson says, that "in many pas-

sages a religious eye may easily discover expressions not very favourable to morals, or to liberty." This sentence is severe, and, perhaps, dogmatical. Crousaz wrote an Examen of "The Essay on Man," and afterwards a Commentary on every remarkable passage; and though it now appears that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter translated the foreign critic, yet it is certain that Johnson encouraged the work, and, perhaps, imbibed those early prejudices which adhered to him to the end of his life. He shuddered at the idea of irreligion. Hence we are told in the life of Pope, "Never were penury of knowledge and vulgarity of sentiment so happily disguised; Pope, in the chair of wisdom, tells much that every man knows, and much that he did not know himself; and gives us comfort in the position, that *though man's a fool, yet God is wise;* that human advantages are unstable; that our true honour is, not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own, and that happiness is always in our power. The reader, when he meets all this in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse." But may it not be said, that every system of ethics must or ought to terminate in plain and general maxims for the use of life? and, though in such axioms no discovery is made, does not the beauty of the moral theory consist in the premises, and the chain of reasoning that leads to the conclusion? May not truth, as Johnson himself says, be conveyed to the mind by a new train of intermediate images? Pope's doctrine about the ruling passion does not seem to be refuted, though it is called, in harsh terms, pernicious as well as false, tending to establish a kind of moral predestination, or over-ruling principle, which cannot be resisted. But Johnson was too easily alarmed in the cause of religion. Organized as the human race is, individuals have different inlets of perception, different powers of mind, and different sensations of pleasure and pain.

> All spread their charms, but charm not all alike,
> On different senses different objects strike:

Hence different passions more or less inflame,
As strong or weak the organs of the frame.
And hence one master-passion in the breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

Brumoy says, Pascal from his infancy felt himself a geometrician; and Vandyke, in like manner, was a painter. Shakspeare, who of all poets had the deepest insight into human nature, was aware of a prevailing bias in the operations of every mind. By him we are told, "*Masterless passion sways us to the mood of what it likes or loaths.*"

It remains to inquire, whether in the lives before us the characters are partial, and too often drawn with malignity of misrepresentation. To prove this it is alleged, that Johnson has misrepresented the circumstances relative to the translation of the first Iliad, and maliciously ascribed that performance to Addison instead of Tickell, with too much reliance on the testimony of Pope, taken from the account in the papers left by Mr. Spence. For a refutation of the fallacy imputed to Addison, we are referred to a note in the "Biographia Britannica," written by the late Judge Blackstone, who, it is said, examined the whole matter with accuracy, and found that the first regular statement of the accusation against Addison was published by Ruffhead, in his Life of Pope, from the materials which he received from Dr. Warburton. But, with all due deference to the learned judge, whose talents deserve all praise, this account is by no means accurate.

Sir Richard Steele, in a dedication of the comedy of the Drummer to Mr. Congreve, gave the first insight into that business. He says, in a style of anger and resentment, "If that gentleman (Mr. Tickell) thinks himself injured, I will allow I have wronged him upon this issue, that (if the reputed translator of the first book of Homer shall please to give us another book) there shall appear another good judge in poetry, besides Mr. Alexander Pope, who shall like it." The authority of Steele outweighs all opinions founded on vain conjecture, and, indeed, seems to be decisive, since we do not find that

Tickell, though warmly pressed, thought proper to vindicate himself.

But the grand proof of Johnson's malignity is the manner in which he has treated the character and conduct of Milton. To enforce this charge has wearied sophistry, and exhausted the invention of a party. What they cannot deny, they palliate; what they cannot prove, they say is probable. But why all this rage against Dr. Johnson? Addison, before him, had said of Milton:

> Oh! had the poet ne'er prophan'd his pen,
> To varnish o'er the guilt of faithless men!

And had not Johnson an equal right to avow his sentiments? Do his enemies claim a privilege to abuse whatever is valuable to Englishmen, either in church or state? and must the liberty of UNLICENSED PRINTING be denied to the friends of the British constitution?

It is unnecessary to pursue the argument through all its artifices, since, dismantled of ornament and seducing language, the plain truth may be stated in a narrow compass. Johnson knew that Milton was a republican: he says, "an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason, than that a popular government was the most frugal; for, the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth." Johnson knew that Milton talked aloud "of the danger of *re-admitting kingship* in this nation;" and when Milton adds, "that a commonwealth was commended, or rather *enjoined*, by our Saviour himself, to all Christians, not without a remarkable disallowance, and the brand of Gentilism *upon kingship*," Johnson thought him no better than a wild enthusiast. He knew as well as Milton, "that the happiness of a nation must needs be firmest and certainest in a full and free council of their own electing, where no single person, but reason only, sways;" but the example of all the republics, recorded in the annals of mankind, gave him no room to hope that *Reason* only would be heard. He knew that the republican form of government, having little or no complication,

and no consonance of parts by a nice mechanism forming a regular whole, was too simple to be beautiful even in theory. In practice it, perhaps, never existed. In its most flourishing state, at Athens, Rome, and Carthage, it was a constant scene of tumult and commotion. From the mischiefs of a wild democracy, the progress has ever been to the dominion of an aristocracy; and the word *aristocracy* fatally includes the boldest and most turbulent citizens, who rise by their crimes, and call themselves the best men in the state. By intrigue, by cabal, and faction, a pernicious oligarchy is sure to succeed, and end at last in the tyranny of a single ruler. Tacitus, the great master of political wisdom, saw, under the mixed authority of king, nobles, and people, a better form of government than Milton's boasted republic; and what Tacitus admired in theory, but despaired of enjoying, Johnson saw established in this country. He knew that it had been overturned by the rage of frantic men; but he knew that, after the iron rod of Cromwell's usurpation, the constitution was once more restored to its first principles. Monarchy was established, and this country was regenerated. It was regenerated a second time at the Revolution: the rights of men were then defined, and the blessings of good order and civil liberty have been ever since diffused through the whole community.

The peace and happiness of society were what Dr. Johnson had at heart. He knew that Milton called his defence of the Regicides a defence of the people of England; but, however glossed and varnished, he thought it an apology for murder. Had the men, who, under a shew of liberty, brought their king to the scaffold, proved by their subsequent conduct, that the public good inspired their actions, the end might have given some sanction to the means; but usurpation and slavery followed. Milton undertook the office of secretary under the despotic power of Cromwell, offering the incense of adulation to his master, with the titles of *Director of public Councils, the Leader of unconquered Armies, the Father of his Country.*

Milton declared, at the same time, that *nothing is more pleasing to God, or more agreeable to reason, than that the highest mind should have the sovereign power.* In this strain of servile flattery Milton gives us the right divine of tyrants. But it seems, in the same piece, he exhorts Cromwell "not to desert those great principles of liberty which he had professed to espouse; for, it would be a grievous enormity, if, after having successfully opposed tyranny, he should himself act the part of a tyrant, and betray the cause that he had defended." This desertion of every honest principle the advocate for liberty lived to see. Cromwell acted the tyrant; and, with vile hypocrisy, told the people, that he had consulted the Lord, and the Lord would have it so. Milton took an under part in the tragedy. Did that become the defender of the people of England? Brutus saw his country enslaved; he struck the blow for freedom, and he died with honour in the cause. Had he lived to be secretary under Tiberius, what would now be said of his memory?

But still, it seems, the prostitution with which Milton is charged, since it cannot be defended, is to be retorted on the character of Johnson. For this purpose a book has been published, called *Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton; to which are added, Milton's Tractate of Education, and Areopagitica.* In this laboured tract we are told, "There is one performance ascribed to the pen of the doctor, where the prostitution is of so singular a nature, that it would be difficult to select an adequate motive for it out of the mountainous heap of conjectural causes of human passions or human caprice. It is the speech of the late unhappy Dr. William Dodd, when he was about to hear the sentence of the law pronounced upon him, in consequence of an indictment for forgery. The voice of the public has given the honour of manufacturing this speech to Dr. Johnson; and the style and configuration of the speech itself confirm the imputation. But it is hardly possible to divine what could be his motive for accepting the office. A man, to express the pre-

cise state of mind of another, about to be destined to an ignominious death for a capital crime, should, one would imagine, have some consciousness, that he himself had incurred some guilt of the same kind." In all the schools of sophistry is there to be found so vile an argument? In the purlieus of Grub-street is there such another mouthful of dirt? in the whole quiver of malice is there so envenomed a shaft?

After this it is to be hoped, that a certain class of men will talk no more of Johnson's malignity. The last apology for Milton is, that he acted according to his principles. But Johnson thought those principles detestable; pernicious to the constitution in church and state, destructive of the peace of society, and hostile to the great fabric of civil policy, which the wisdom of ages has taught every Briton to revere, to love, and cherish. He reckoned Milton in that class of men, whom the Roman historian says, when they want, by a sudden convulsion to overturn the government, they roar and clamour for liberty; if they succeed, they destroy liberty itself. *Ut imperium evertant, Libertatem præferunt; si perverterint, libertatem ipsam aggredientur.* Such were the sentiments of Dr. Johnson; and it may be asked, in the language of Bolingbroke, "Are these sentiments, which any man, who is born a Briton, in any circumstances, in any situation, ought to be ashamed or afraid to avow?" Johnson has done ample justice to Milton's poetry: the criticism on Paradise Lost is a sublime composition. Had he thought the author as good and pious a citizen as Dr. Watts, he would have been ready, notwithstanding his non-conformity, to do equal honour to the memory of the man.

It is now time to close this Essay, which the author fears has been drawn too much into length. In the progress of the work, feeble as it may be, he thought himself performing the last human office to the memory of a friend, whom he loved, esteemed, and honoured.

His saltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani
Munere.——

The author of these Memoirs has been anxious to give the features of the man, and the true character of the author. He has not suffered the hand of partiality to colour his excellences with too much warmth; nor has he endeavoured to throw his singularities too much into the shade. Dr. Johnson's failings may well be forgiven for the sake of his virtues. His defects were spots in the sun. His piety, his kind affections, and the goodness of his heart, present an example worthy of imitation. His works still remain a monument of genius and of learning. Had he written nothing but what is contained in this edition, the quantity shews a life spent in study and meditation. If to this be added the labour of his Dictionary, and other various productions, it may be fairly allowed, as he used to say of himself, that he has written his share. In the volumes here presented to the publick, the reader will find a perpetual source of pleasure and instruction. With due precautions, authors may learn to grace their style with elegance, harmony, and precision; they may be taught to think with vigour and perspicuity; and to crown the whole, by a diligent attention to these books all may advance in virtue.

In 1795, a statue in honour of Dr. JOHNSON was erected in St. Paul's Cathedral, by a public subscription. It represents the philosopher in the attitude of profound thought, conveying at the same time as much of the peculiar character of this great writer, as can be exhibited in a single statue. The inscription on the pedestal is by Dr. Parr.

A. Ω.

SAMUELI . JOHNSON
GRAMMATICO . ET . CRITICO
SCRIPTORUM . ANGLICORUM . LITTERATE . PERITO
POETAE . LUMINIBUS . SENTENTIARUM
ET . PONDERIBUS . VERBORUM . ADMIRABILI
MAGISTRO . VIRTUTIS . GRAVISSIMO
HOMINI . OPTIMO . ET . SINGULARIS . EXEMPLI
QUI . VIXIT . ANN . LXXV . MENS . Iℓ . DIEB . XIIIℓ
DECESSIT . IDIB . DECEMBR . ANN . CHRIST . cIↃ . IↃCC.LXXXIIIℓ
SEPULT . IN . AED . SANCT . PETR . WESTMONASTERIENS.
XIIIℓ. KAL . JANUAR . ANN . CHRIST. cIↃ . IↃCCLXXXV
AMICI . ET . SODALES . LITTERARII
PECUNIA . CONLATA
H . M . FACIVND . CURAVER.

On one side of the monument:

FACIEBAT JOHANNES BACON SCULPTOR ANN. CHRIST.
MDCCLXXXXV.

THE

RAMBLER.

N° 1. TUESDAY, *March* 20, 1749-50.

Cur tamen hoc libeat potius decurrere campo,
Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus,
Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam.—JUV.

Why to expatiate in this beaten field,
Why arms, oft us'd in vain, I mean to wield;
If time permit, and candour will attend,
Some satisfaction this essay may lend.—ELPHINSTON.

THE difficulty of the first address on any new occasion, is felt by every man in his transactions with the world, and confessed by the settled and regular forms of salutation which necessity has introduced into all languages. Judgment was wearied with the perplexity of being forced upon choice, where there was no motive to preference; and it was found convenient that some easy method of introduction should be established, which, if it wanted the allurement of novelty, might enjoy the security of prescription.

Perhaps few authors have presented themselves before the publick, without wishing that such ceremonial modes of entrance had been anciently established, as might have freed them from those dangers which the desire of pleasing is certain to produce, and precluded the vain expedients of softening censure by apologies, or rousing attention by abruptness.

The epick writers have found the proemial part of the poem such an addition to their undertaking, that they have almost unanimously adopted the first lines of Homer, and the reader needs only be informed of the subject, to know in what manner the poem will begin.

But this solemn repetition is hitherto the peculiar distinction of heroick poetry; it has never been legally extended to the lower orders of literature, but seems to be considered as an hereditary privilege, to be enjoyed only by those who claim it from their alliance to the genius of Homer.

The rules which the injudicious use of this prerogative suggested to Horace, may indeed be applied to the direction of candidates for inferior fame; it may be proper for all to remember, that they ought not to raise expectation which it is not in their power to satisfy, and that it is more pleasing to see smoke brightening into flame, than flame sinking into smoke.

This precept has been long received, both from regard to the authority of Horace, and its conformity to the general opinion of the world; yet there have been always some, that thought it no deviation from modesty to recommend their own labours, and imagined themselves entitled by indisputable merit to an exemption from general restraints, and to elevations not allowed in common life. They, perhaps, believed, that when, like Thucydides, they bequeathed to mankind κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ, *an estate for ever*, it was an additional favour to inform them of its value.

It may, indeed, be no less dangerous to c[illegible] on certain occasions, too little than too much. There is something captivating in spirit and intrepidity, to which we often yield, as to a resistless power; nor can he reasonably expect the confidence of others, who too apparently distrusts himself.

Plutarch, in his enumeration of the various occasions on which a man may without just offence proclaim his own excellencies, has omitted the case of an author entering the world; unless it may be comprehended under his general position, that a man may lawfully praise himself for those qualities which cannot be known but from his own mouth; as when he is among strangers, and can have no opportunity of an actual exertion of his powers. That the case of an author is parallel will scarcely be granted, be-

cause he necessarily discovers the degree of his merit to his judges, when he appears at his trial. But it should be remembered, that unless his judges are inclined to favour him, they will hardly be persuaded to hear the cause.

In love, the state which fills the heart with a degree of solicitude next that of an author, it has been held a maxim, that success is most easily obtained by indirect and unperceived approaches; he who too soon professes himself a lover, raises obstacles to his own wishes, and those whom disappointments have taught experience, endeavour to conceal their passion till they believe their mistress wishes for the discovery. The same method, if it were practicable to writers, would save many complaints of the severity of the age, and the caprices of criticism. If a man could glide imperceptibly into the favour of the publick, and only proclaim his pretensions to literary honours when he is sure of not being rejected, he might commence author with better hopes, as his failings might escape contempt, though he shall never attain much regard.

But since the world supposes every man that writes, ambitious of applause, as some ladies have taught themselves to believe that every man intends love, who expresses civility, the miscarriage of any endeavour in learning raises an unbounded contempt, indulged by most minds without scruple, as an honest triumph over unjust claims, and exorbitant expectations. The artifices of those who put themselves in this hazardous state, have therefore been multiplied in proportion to their fear as well as their ambition; and are to be looked upon with more indulgence, as they are incited at once by the two great movers of the human mind, the desire of good, and the fear of evil. For who can wonder that, allured on one side, and frightened on the other, some should endeavour to gain favour by bribing the judge with an appearance of respect which they do not feel, to excite compassion by confessing weakness of which they are not convinced; and others to attract regard by a shew of openness and mag-

nanimity, by a daring profession of their own deserts, and a publick challenge of honours and rewards?

The ostentatious and haughty display of themselves has been the usual refuge of diurnal writers, in vindication of whose practice it may be said, that what it wants in prudence is supplied by sincerity, and who at least may plead, that if their boasts deceive any into the perusal of their performances, they defraud them of but little time.

Quid enim? Concurritur—horæ
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.

The battle join, and in a moment's flight,
Death, or a joyful conquest, ends the fight.—FRANCIS.

The question concerning the merit of the day is soon decided, and we are not condemned to toil through half a folio, to be convinced that the writer has broke his promise.

It is one among many reasons for which I purpose to endeavour the entertainment of my countrymen by a short essay on Tuesday and Saturday, that I hope not much to tire those whom I shall not happen to please; and if I am not commended for the beauty of my works, to be at least pardoned for their brevity. But whether my expectations are most fixed on pardon or praise, I think it not necessary to discover; for having accurately weighed the reasons for arrogance and submission, I find them so nearly equiponderant, that my impatience to try the event of my first performance will not suffer me to attend any longer the trepidations of the balance.

There are, indeed, many conveniences almost peculiar to this method of publication, which may naturally flatter the author, whether he be confident or timorous. The man to whom the extent of his knowledge, or the sprightliness of his imagination, has, in his own opinion, already secured the praises of the world, willingly takes that way of displaying his abilities which will soonest give him an opportunity of hearing the voice of fame; it heightens his alacrity to think in how many places he shall hear what he is now writing, read with ecstacies to-morrow. He

will often please himself with reflecting, that the author of a large treatise must proceed with anxiety, lest before the completion of his work, the attention of the publick may have changed its object; but that he who is confined to no single topick, may follow the national taste through all its variations, and catch the *aura popularis*, the gale of favour, from what point soever it shall blow.

Nor is the prospect less likely to ease the doubts of the cautious, and the terrors of the fearful, for to such the shortness of every single paper is a powerful encouragement. He that questions his abilities to arrange the dissimilar parts of an extensive plan, or fears to be lost in a complicated system, may yet hope to adjust a few pages without perplexity; and if, when he turns over the repositories of his memory, he finds his collection too small for a volume, he may yet have enough to furnish out an essay. He that would fear to lay out too much time upon an experiment of which he knows not the event, persuades himself that a few days will shew him what he is to expect from his learning and his genius. If he thinks his own judgment not sufficiently enlightened, he may, by attending to the remarks which every paper will produce, rectify his opinions. If he should with too little premeditation encumber himself by an unwieldy subject, he can quit it without confessing his ignorance, and pass to other topicks less dangerous, or more tractable. And if he finds, with all his industry, and all his artifices, that he cannot deserve regard, or cannot attain it, he may let the design fall at once, and, without injury to others or himself, retire to amusements of greater pleasure, or to studies of better prospect.

N° 2. SATURDAY, *March* 24, 1749-50.

Stare loco nescit, pereunt vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.—STATIUS.

Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,
And pawing seems to beat the distant plain;
Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost,
And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.—POPE.

THAT the mind of man is never satisfied with the objects immediately before it, but is always breaking away from the present moment, and losing itself in schemes of future felicity; and that we forget the proper use of the time now in our power to provide for the enjoyment of that which, perhaps, may never be granted us, has been frequently remarked; and as this practice is a commodious subject of raillery to the gay, and of declamation to the serious, it has been ridiculed with all the pleasantry of wit, and exaggerated with all the amplifications of rhetorick. Every instance, by which its absurdity might appear most flagrant, has been studiously collected; it has been marked with every epithet of contempt, and all the tropes and figures have been called forth against it.

Censure is willingly indulged, because it always implies some superiority; men please themselves with imagining that they have made a deeper search, or wider survey, than others, and detected faults and follies, which escape vulgar observation. And the pleasure of wantoning in common topicks is so tempting to a writer, that he cannot easily resign it; a train of sentiments generally received enables him to shine without labour, and to conquer without a contest. It is so easy to laugh at the folly of him who lives only in idea, refuses immediate ease for distant pleasures, and, instead of enjoying the blessings of life, lets life glide away in preparations to enjoy them; it affords such opportunities of triumphant exultation, to exemplify the uncertainty of the human state, to rouse mortals from their dream, and inform them of the silent celerity of time, that we may believe authors willing rather to trans-

mit than examine so advantageous a principle, and more inclined to pursue a track so smooth and so flowery than attentively to consider whether it leads to truth.

This quality of looking forward into futurity, seems the unavoidable condition of a being, whose motions are gradual, and whose life is progressive: as his powers are limited, he must use means for the attainment of his ends, and intend first what he performs last; as by continual advances from his first stage of existence, he is perpetually varying the horizon of his prospects, he must always discover new motives of action, new excitements of fear, and allurements of desire.

The end, therefore, which at present calls forth our efforts, will be found, when it is once gained, to be only one of the means to some remoter end. The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure, but from hope to hope.

He that directs his steps to a certain point, must frequently turn his eyes to that place which he strives to reach; he that undergoes the fatigue of labour, must solace his weariness with the contemplation of its reward. In agriculture, one of the most simple and necessary employments, no man turns up the ground but because he thinks of the harvest, that harvest which blights may intercept, which inundations may sweep away, or which death or calamity may hinder him from reaping.

Yet as few maxims are widely received or long retained but for some conformity with truth and nature, it must be confessed, that this caution against keeping our view too intent upon remote advantages is not without its propriety or usefulness, though it may have been recited with too much levity, or inforced with too little distinction: for not to speak of that vehemence of desire which presses through right and wrong to its gratification, or that anxious inquietude which is justly chargeable with distrust of heaven, subjects too solemn for my present purpose; it frequently happens that, by indulging early the raptures of success, we forget the measures necessary to secure it, and suffer

the imagination to riot in the fruition of some possible good, till the time of obtaining it has slipped away.

There would, however, be few enterprizes of great labour or hazard undertaken, if we had not the power of magnifying the advantages which we persuade ourselves to expect from them. When the knight of La Mancha gravely recounts to his companion the adventures by which he is to signalize himself in such a manner that he shall be summoned to the support of empires, solicited to accept the heiress of the crown which he has preserved, have honours and riches to scatter about him, and an island to bestow on his worthy squire, very few readers, amidst their mirth or pity, can deny that they have admitted visions of the same kind; though they have not, perhaps, expected events equally strange, or by means equally inadequate. When we pity him, we reflect on our own disappointments; and when we laugh, our hearts inform us that he is not more ridiculous than ourselves, except that he tells what we have only thought.

The understanding of a man naturally sanguine, may, indeed, be easily vitiated by the luxurious indulgence of hope, however necessary to the production of every thing great or excellent, as some plants are destroyed by too open exposure to that sun which gives life and beauty to the vegetable world.

Perhaps no class of the human species requires more to be cautioned against this anticipation of happiness, than those that aspire to the name of authors. A man of lively fancy no sooner finds a hint moving in his mind, than he makes momentaneous excursions to the press, and to the world, and, with a little encouragement from flattery, pushes forward into future ages, and prognosticates the honours to be paid him, when envy is extinct, and faction forgotten, and those, whom partiality now suffers to obscure him, shall have given way to the triflers of as short duration as themselves.

Those who have proceeded so far as to appeal to the tribunal of succeeding times, are not likely to be cured of

and of infatuation; but all endeavours ought to be used for the prevention of a disease, for which, when it has attained its height, perhaps no remedy will be found in the gardens of philosophy, however she may boast her physick of the mind, her catharticks of vice, or lenitives of passion.

I shall, therefore, while I am yet but lightly touched with the symptoms of the writer's malady, endeavour to fortify myself against the infection, not without some weak hope that my preservatives may extend their virtues to others, whose employment exposes them to the same danger.

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.

Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm,
If thrice read over, shall its force disarm.—FRANCIS.

It is the sage advice of Epictetus, that a man should accustom himself often to think of what is most shocking and terrible, that by such reflections he may be preserved from too ardent wishes for seeming good, and from too much dejection in real evil.

There is nothing more dreadful to an author than neglect, compared with which, reproach, hatred, and opposition, are names of happiness; yet this worse, this meanest fate, every one who dares to write has reason to fear.

I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.
Go now, and meditate thy tuneful lays.—ELPHINSTON.

It may not be unfit for him who makes a new entrance into the lettered world, so far to suspect his own powers, as to believe that he possibly may deserve neglect; that nature may not have qualified him much to enlarge or embellish knowledge, nor sent him forth intitled by indisputable superiority to regulate the conduct of the rest of mankind; that, though the world must be granted to be yet in ignorance, he is not destined to dispel the cloud, nor to shine out as one of the luminaries of life. For this suspicion, every catalogue of a library will furnish sufficient reason; as he will find it crowded with names of men, who, though now forgotten, were once no less enterprizing or confident

than himself, equally pleased with their own prod ssible, equally caressed by their patrons, and flattered by r friends.

But though it should happen that an author is capable of excelling, yet his merit may pass without notice, huddled in the variety of things, and thrown into the general miscellany of life. He that endeavours after fame by writing, solicits the regard of a multitude fluctuating in pleasures or immersed in business, without time for intellectual amusements; he appeals to judges, prepossessed by passions, or corrupted by prejudices, which preclude their approbation of any new performance. Some are too indolent to read any thing, till its reputation is established; others too envious to promote that fame which gives them pain by its increase. What is new is opposed, because most are unwilling to be taught; and what is known is rejected, because it is not sufficiently considered, that men more frequently require to be reminded than informed. The learned are afraid to declare their opinion early, lest they should put their reputation in hazard; the ignorant always imagine themselves giving some proof of delicacy, when they refuse to be pleased: and he that finds his way to reputation through all these obstructions, must acknowledge that he is indebted to other causes besides his industry, his learning, or his wit.

N° 3. TUESDAY, *March* 27, 1750.

VIRTUS, *repulsæ nescia sordidæ,*
Intaminatis fulget honoribus,
Nec sumit, aut ponit secures,
Arbitrio popularis auræ.—HOR.

Undisappointed in designs,
With native honours Virtue shines;
Nor takes up pow'r, nor lays it down,
As giddy rabbles smile or frown.—ELPHINSTON.

THE task of an author is, either to teach what is not known, or to recommend known truths by his manner of adorning them; either to let new light in upon the mind,

and open new scenes to the prospect, or to vary the dress and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace and more powerful attractions, to spread such flowers over the regions through which the intellect has already made its progress, as may tempt it to return, and take a second view of things hastily passed over, or negligently regarded.

Either of these labours is very difficult, because, that they may not be fruitless, men must not only be persuaded of their errours, but reconciled to their guide; they must not only confess their ignorance, but, what is still less pleasing, must allow that he from whom they are to learn is more knowing than themselves.

It might be imagined that such an employment was in itself sufficiently irksome and hazardous; that none would be found so malevolent as wantonly to add weight to the stone of Sisyphus; and that few endeavours would be used to obstruct those advances to reputation, which must be made at such an expence of time and thought, with so great hazard in the miscarriage, and with so little advantage from the success.

Yet there is a certain race of men, that either imagine it their duty, or make it their amusement, to hinder the reception of every work of learning or genius, who stand as centinels in the avenues of fame, and value themselves upon giving IGNORANCE and ENVY the first notice of a prey.

To these men, who distinguish themselves by the appellation of CRITICKS, it is necessary for a new author to find some means of recommendation. It is probable, that the most malignant of these persecutors might be somewhat softened, and prevailed on, for a short time, to remit their fury. Having for this purpose considered many expedients, I find in the records of ancient times, that ARGUS was lulled by musick, and CERBERUS quieted with a sop; and am, therefore, inclined to believe that modern criticks, who, if they have not the eyes, have the watchfulness of ARGUS, and can bark as loud as CERBERUS, though, perhaps, they cannot bite with equal force, might be subdued

by methods of the same kind. I have heard how some have been pacified with claret and a supper, and others laid asleep with the soft notes of flattery.

Though the nature of my undertaking gives me sufficient reason to dread the united attacks of this virulent generation, yet, I have not hitherto persuaded myself to take any measures for flight or treaty. For I am in doubt whether they can act against me by lawful authority, and suspect that they have presumed upon a forged commission, stiled themselves the ministers of CRITICISM, without any authentick evidence of delegation, and uttered their own determinations as the decrees of a higher judicature.

CRITICISM, from whom they derive their claim to decide the fate of writers, was the eldest daughter of LABOUR and of TRUTH: she was, at her birth, committed to the care of JUSTICE, and brought up by her in the palace of WISDOM. Being soon distinguished by the celestials, for her uncommon qualities, she was appointed the governess of FANCY, and empowered to beat time to the chorus of the MUSES, when they sung before the throne of JUPITER.

When the MUSES condescended to visit this lower world, they came accompanied by CRITICISM, to whom, upon her descent from her native regions, JUSTICE gave a sceptre, to be carried aloft in her right hand, one end of which was tipped with ambrosia, and inwreathed with a golden rage of amaranths and bays; the other end was incircled with cypress and poppies, and dipped in the waters of oblivion. In her left hand, she bore an unextinguishable torch, manufactured by LABOUR, and lighted by TRUTH, of which it was the particular quality immediately to shew every thing in its true form, however it might be disguised to common eyes. Whatever ART could complicate, or FOLLY could confound, was, upon the first gleam of the Torch of TRUTH, exhibited in its distinct parts and original simplicity; it darted through the labyrinths of sophistry, and shewed at once all the absurdities to which they served for refuge; it pierced through the robes which rhetoric often sold to

falsehood, and detected the disproportion of parts which artificial veils had been contrived to cover.

Thus furnished for the execution of her office, CRITICISM came down to survey the performances of those who professed themselves the votaries of the MUSES. Whatever was brought before her, she beheld by the steady light of the Torch of TRUTH; and when her examination had convinced her, that the laws of just writing had been observed, she touched it with the amaranthine end of the sceptre, and consigned it over to immortality.

But it more frequently happened, that in the works which required her inspection, there was some imposture attempted; that false colours were laboriously laid; that some secret inequality was found between the words and sentiments, or some dissimilitude of the ideas and the original objects; that incongruities were linked together, or that some parts were of no use but to enlarge the appearance of the whole, without contributing to its beauty, solidity, or usefulness.

Wherever such discoveries were made, and they were made whenever these faults were committed, CRITICISM refused the touch which conferred the sanction of immortality; and, when the errours were frequent and gross, reversed the sceptre, and let drops of lethe distil from the poppies and cypress a fatal mildew, which immediately began to waste the work away, till it was at last totally destroyed.

There were some compositions brought to the test, in which, when the strongest light was thrown upon them, their beauties and faults appeared so equally mingled, that CRITICISM stood with her sceptre poised in her hand, in doubt whether to shed lethe, or ambrosia, upon them. These at last increased to so great a number, that she was weary of attending such doubtful claims, and, for fear of using improperly the sceptre of JUSTICE, referred the cause to be considered by TIME.

The proceedings of TIME, though very dilatory, were, [illegible] few caprices excepted, conformable to justice: and

many who thought themselves secure by a short forbearance, have sunk under his scythe, as they were posting down with their volumes in triumph to futurity. It was observable that some were destroyed by little and little, and others crushed for ever by a single blow.

CRITICISM having long kept her eye fixed steadily upon TIME was at last so well satisfied with his conduct, that she withdrew from the earth with her patroness ASTREA, and left PREJUDICE and FALSE TASTE to ravage at large as the associates of FRAUD and MISCHIEF; contenting herself thenceforth to shed her influence from afar upon some select minds, fitted for its reception by learning and by virtue.

Before her departure she broke her sceptre, of which the shivers, that formed the ambrosial end, were caught up by FLATTERY, and those that had been infected with the waters of lethe were, with equal haste, seized by MALEVOLENCE. The followers of FLATTERY, to whom she distributed her part of the sceptre, neither had nor desired light, but touched indiscriminately whatever POWER or INTEREST happened to exhibit. The companions of MALEVOLENCE were supplied by the FURIES with a torch, which had this quality peculiar to infernal lustre, that its light fell only upon faults.

> No light, but rather darkness visible,
> Serv'd only to discover sights of woe.

With these fragments of authority, the slaves of FLATTERY and MALEVOLENCE marched out, at the command of their mistresses, to confer immortality, or condemn to oblivion. But the sceptre had now lost its power; and TIME passes his sentence at leisure, without any regard to their determinations.

N° 4. Saturday, *March* 31, 1750.

Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ.—Hor.

And join both profit and delight in one.—Creech.

The works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.

This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of romance, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comick poetry. Its province is to bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder: it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroick romance, and can neither employ giants to snatch away a lady from the nuptial rites, nor knights to bring her back from captivity; it can neither bewilder its personages in deserts, nor lodge them in imaginary castles.

I remember a remark made by Scaliger upon Pontanus, that all his writings are filled with the same images; and that if you take from him his lilies and his roses, his satyrs and his dryads, he will have nothing left that can be called poetry. In like manner almost all the fictions of the last age will vanish, if you deprive them of a hermit and a wood, a battle and a shipwreck.

Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it; for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of langnation: had no further care than to retire to his closet..e, which is invention, and heat his mind with incredibid by wicked- was thus produced without fear of criticiribed, I cannot

toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.

The task of our present writers is very different; it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world. Their performances have, as Horace expresses it, *plus oneris quantum veniæ minus*, little indulgence, and therefore more difficulty. They are engaged in portraits of which every one knows the original, and can detect any deviation from exactness of resemblance. Other writings are safe, except from the malice of learning, but these are in danger from every common reader: as the slipper ill executed was censured by a shoemaker who happened to stop in his way at the Venus of Apelles.

But the fear of not being approved as just copiers of human manners, is not the most important concern that an author of this sort ought to have before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account.

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears; are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree, of caution, is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust [illegible]ices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combina[illegible]ges.

[illegible]ances formerly written, every transaction [illegible]as so remote from all that passes among

men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellencies in common with himself.

But when an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man; young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behaviour and success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.

For this reason these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employed: as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such a situation, as to display that lustre which before was buried among common stones.

It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation: greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wickedness. If the world be promiscuously described, I cannot

see of what use it can be to read the account: or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon mankind as upon a mirrour which shews all that presents itself without discrimination.

It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears; for many characters ought never to be drawn: nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience; for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to shew mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by TREACHERY for INNOCENCE, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to encrease prudence without impairing virtue.

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or perhaps, regard them with some kindness, for being united with so much merit.

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villany made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellencies; but such have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved, than the art of murdering without pain.

Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequence of this notion, that certain virtues have their correspondent faults, and therefore that to exhibit either apart is to deviate from probability. Thus men are ob-

served by Swift to be "grateful in the same degree as they are resentful." This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes man to act from a brute impulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object; for, otherwise, though it should be allowed that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged when reason is consulted; yet, unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life.

Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will obstruct gratitude, by unwillingness to admit that inferiority which obligation implies; and it is very unlikely that he who cannot think he receives a favour, will acknowledge or repay it.

It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted; for while men consider good and evil as springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other, and in judging, if not of others at least of themselves, will be apt to estimate their virtues by their vices. To this fatal errour all those will contribute, who confound the colours of right and wrong, and, instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.

In narratives where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit, we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach, which, exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may, by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. Vice, for vice is necessary to be shewn, should always dis-

gust; nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems: for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred. The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he was but feared; and there are thousands of the readers of romances willing to be thought wicked, if they may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.

N° 5. TUESDAY, *April* 3, 1750.

Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
Nunc frondent silvæ, nunc formosissimus annus.—VIRG.

Now ev'ry field, now ev'ry tree is green;
Now genial Nature's fairest face is seen.—ELPHINSTON.

EVERY man is sufficiently discontented with some circumstances of his present state, to suffer his imagination to range more or less in quest of future happiness, and to fix upon some point of time, in which, by the removal of the inconvenience which now perplexes him, or acquisition of the advantage which he at present wants, he shall find the condition of his life very much improved.

When this time, which is too often expected with great impatience, at last arrives, it generally comes without the blessing for which it was desired; but we solace ourselves with some new prospect, and press forward again with equal eagerness.

It is lucky for a man, in whom this temper prevails, when he turns his hopes upon things wholly out of his own power; since he forbears then to precipitate his affairs, for the sake of the great event that is to complete

his felicity, and waits for the blissful hour with less neglect of the measures necessary to be taken in the mean time.

I have long known a person of this temper, who indulged his dream of happiness with less hurt to himself than such chimerical wishes commonly produce, and adjusted his scheme with such address, that his hopes were in full bloom three parts of the year, and in the other part never wholly blasted. Many, perhaps, would be desirous of learning by what means he procured to himself such a cheap and lasting satisfaction. It was gained by a constant practice of referring the removal of all his uneasiness to the coming of the next spring; if his health was impaired, the spring would restore it; if what he wanted was at a high price, it would fall its value in the spring.

The spring indeed did often come without any of these effects, but he was always certain that the next would be more propitious; nor was ever convinced, that the present spring would fail him before the middle of summer; for he always talked of the spring as coming till it was past, and when it was once past, every one agreed with him that it was coming.

By long converse with this man, I am perhaps brought to feel immoderate pleasure in the contemplation of this delightful season; but I have the satisfaction of finding many whom it can be no shame to resemble, infected with the same enthusiasm; for there is, I believe, scarce any poet of eminence, who has not left some testimony of his fondness for the flowers, the zephyrs, and the warblers of the spring. Nor has the most luxuriant imagination been able to describe the serenity and happiness of the golden age, otherwise than by giving a perpetual spring, as the highest reward of uncorrupted innocence.

There is, indeed, something inexpressibly pleasing in the annual renovation of the world, and the new display of the treasures of nature. The cold and darkness of winter, with the naked deformity of every object on which

we turn our eyes, make us rejoice at the succeeding season, as well for what we have escaped as for what we may enjoy; and every budding flower, which a warm situation brings early to our view, is considered by us as a messenger to notify the approach of more joyous days.

The SPRING affords to a mind, so free from the disturbance of cares or passions as to be vacant to calm amusements, almost every thing that our present state makes us capable of enjoying. The variegated verdure of the fields and woods, the succession of grateful odours, the voice of pleasure pouring out its notes on every side, with the gladness apparently conceived by every animal, from the growth of his food, and the clemency of the weather, throw over the whole earth an air of gaiety, significantly expressed by the smile of nature.

Yet there are men to whom these scenes are able to give no delight, and who hurry away from all the varieties of rural beauty, to lose their hours and divert their thoughts by cards or assemblies, a tavern dinner, or the prattle of the day.

It may be laid down as a position which will seldom deceive, that when a man cannot bear his own company, there is something wrong. He must fly from himself, either because he feels a tediousness in life from the equipoise of an empty mind, which, having no tendency to one motion more than another, but as it is impelled by some external power, must always have recourse to foreign objects; or he must be afraid of the intrusion of some unpleasing ideas, and perhaps is struggling to escape from the remembrance of a loss, the fear of a calamity, or some other thought of greater horrour.

Those whom sorrow incapacitates to enjoy the pleasures of contemplation, may properly apply to such diversions, provided they are innocent, as lay strong hold on the attention; and those, whom fear of any future affliction chains down to misery, must endeavour to obviate the danger.

My considerations shall, on this occasion, be turned on

such as are burthensome to themselves merely because they want subjects for reflection, and to whom the volume of nature is thrown open without affording them pleasure or instruction, because they never learned to read the characters.

A French author has advanced this seeming paradox, that *very few men know how to take a walk;* and, indeed, it is true, that few know how to take a walk with a prospect of any other pleasure, than the same company would have afforded them at home.

There are animals that borrow their colour from the neighbouring body, and consequently vary their hue as they happen to change their place. In like manner it ought to be the endeavour of every man to derive his reflections from the objects about him; for it is to no purpose that he alters his position, if his attention continues fixed to the same point. The mind should be kept open to the access of every new idea, and so far disengaged from the predominance of particular thoughts, as easily to accommodate itself to occasional entertainment.

A man that has formed this habit of turning every new object to his entertainment, finds in the productions of nature an inexhaustible stock of materials upon which he can employ himself, without any temptations to envy or malevolence; faults, perhaps, seldom totally avoided by those, whose judgment is much exercised upon the works of art. He has always a certain prospect of discovering new reasons for adoring the sovereign Author of the universe, and probable hopes of making some discovery of benefit to others, or of profit to himself. There is no doubt but many vegetables and animals have qualities that might be of great use, to the knowledge of which there is not required much force of penetration, or fatigue of study, but only frequent experiments, and close attention. What is said by the chemists of their darling mercury, is, perhaps, true of every body through the whole creation, that if a thousand lives should be spent upon it, all its properties would not be found out.

Mankind must necessarily be diversified by various tastes, since life affords and requires such multiplicity of employments, and a nation of naturalists is neither to be hoped, nor desired; but it is surely not improper to point out a fresh amusement to those who languish in health, and repine in plenty, for want of some source of diversion that may be less easily exhausted, and to inform the multitudes of both sexes, who are burdened with every new day, that there are many shows which they have not seen.

He that enlarges his curiosity after the works of nature, demonstrably multiplies the inlets to happiness; and therefore, the younger part of my readers, to whom I dedicate this vernal speculation, must excuse me for calling upon them, to make use at once of the spring of the year, and the spring of life; to acquire, while their minds may be yet impressed with new images, a love of innocent pleasures, and an ardour for useful knowledge; and to remember, that a blighted spring makes a barren year, and that the vernal flowers, however beautiful and gay, are only intended by nature as preparatives to autumnal fruits.

N° 6. SATURDAY, *April* 7, 1750.

Strenua nos exercet inertia, navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere: quod petis, hic est;
Est Ulubris, animus si te non deficit æquus.—HOR.

Active in indolence, abroad we roam
In quest of happiness which dwells at home:
With vain pursuits fatigu'd, at length you'll find,
No place excludes it from an equal mind.—ELPHINSTON.

THAT man should never suffer his happiness to depend upon external circumstances, is one of the chief precepts of the Stoical philosophy; a precept, indeed, which that lofty sect has extended beyond the condition of human life, and in which some of them seem to have comprised an utter exclusion of all corporal pain and pleasure from the regard or attention of a wise man.

Such *sapientia insaniens*, as Horace calls the doctrine of another sect, such extravagance of philosophy, can want neither authority nor argument for its confutation; it is overthrown by the experience of every hour, and the powers of nature rise up against it. But we may very properly inquire, how near to this exalted state it is in our power to approach, how far we can exempt ourselves from outward influences, and secure to our minds a state of tranquillity: for, though the boast of absolute independence is ridiculous and vain, yet a mean flexibility to every impulse, and a patient submission to the tyranny of casual troubles, is below the dignity of that mind, which, however depraved or weakened, boasts its derivation from a celestial original, and hopes for an union with infinite goodness, and unvariable felicity.

Ni vitiis pejora fovens
Proprium deserat ortum.

Unless the soul, to vice a thrall,
Desert her own original.

The necessity of erecting ourselves to some degree of intellectual dignity, and of preserving resources of pleasure, which may not be wholly at the mercy of accident, is never more apparent than when we turn our eyes upon those whom fortune has let loose to their own conduct; who, not being chained down by their condition to a regular and stated allotment of their hours, are obliged to find themselves business or diversion, and having nothing within that can entertain or employ them, are compelled to try all the arts of destroying time.

The numberless expedients practised by this class of mortals to alleviate the burthen of life, are not less shameful, nor, perhaps, much less pitiable, than those to which a trader on the edge of bankruptcy is reduced. I have seen melancholy overspread a whole family at the disappointment of a party for cards; and when, after the proposal of a thousand schemes, and the dispatch of the footman upon a hundred messages, they have submitted, with gloomy resignation, to the misfortune of passing one even-

ing in conversation with each other; on a sudden, such are the revolutions of the world, an unexpected visitor has brought them relief, acceptable as provision to a starving city, and enabled them to hold out till the next day.

The general remedy of those, who are uneasy without knowing the cause, is change of place; they are willing to imagine that their pain is the consequence of some local inconvenience, and endeavour to fly from it, as children from their shadows; always hoping for some more satisfactory delight from every new scene, and always returning home with disappointment and complaints.

Who can look upon this kind of infatuation, without reflecting on those that suffer under the dreadful symptom of canine madness, termed by physicians the *dread of water?* These miserable wretches, unable to drink, though burning with thirst, are sometimes known to try various contortions, or inclinations of the body, flattering themselves that they can swallow in one posture that liquor which they find in another to repel their lips.

Yet such folly is not peculiar to the thoughtless or ignorant, but sometimes seizes those minds which seem most exempted from it, by the variety of attainments, quickness of penetration, or severity of judgment; and, indeed, the pride of wit and knowledge is often mortified by finding that they confer no security against the common errours, which mislead the weakest and meanest of mankind.

These reflections arose in my mind upon the remembrance of a passage in Cowley's preface to his poems, where, however exalted by genius, and enlarged by study, he informs us of a scheme of happiness to which the imagination of a girl upon the loss of her first lover could have scarcely given way; but which he seems to have indulged, till he had totally forgotten its absurdity, and would probably have put in execution, had he been hindered only by his reason.

" My desire," says he, " has been for some years past, though the execution has been accidentally diverted, and

does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffick of those parts, which is the end of most men that travel thither; but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat, but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy."

Such was the chimerical provision which Cowley had made in his own mind, for the quiet of his remaining life, and which he seems to recommend to posterity, since there is no other reason for disclosing it. Surely no stronger instance can be given of a persuasion that content was the inhabitant of particular regions, and that a man might set sail with a fair wind, and leave behind him all his cares, incumbrances, and calamities.

If he travelled so far with no other purpose than to *bury himself in some obscure retreat*, he might have found in his own country, innumerable coverts sufficiently dark to have concealed the genius of Cowley; for whatever might be his opinion of the importunity with which he might be summoned back into publick life, a short experience would have convinced him, that privation is easier than acquisition, and that it would require little continuance to free himself from the intrusion of the world. There is pride enough in the human heart to prevent much desire of acquaintance with a man, by whom we are sure to be neglected, however his reputation for science or virtue may excite our curiosity or esteem; so that the lover of retirement needs not be afraid lest the respect of strangers should overwhelm him with visits. Even those to whom he has formerly been known, will very patiently support his absence when they have tried a little to live without him, and found new diversions for those moments which his company contributed to exhilarate.

It was, perhaps, ordained by Providence, to hinder us from tyrannizing over one another, that no individual should be of such importance, as to cause, by his retire-

ment or death, any chasm in the world. And Cowley had conversed to little purpose with mankind, if he had never remarked, how soon the useful friend, the gay companion, and the favoured lover, when once they are removed from before the sight, give way to the succession of new objects.

The privacy, therefore, of his hermitage might have been safe enough from violation, though he had chosen it within the limits of his native island; he might have found here preservatives against the *vanities* and *vexations* of the world, not less efficacious than those which the woods or fields of America could afford him: but having once his mind imbittered with disgust, he conceived it impossible to be far enough from the cause of his uneasiness; and was posting away with the expedition of a coward, who, for want of venturing to look behind him, thinks the enemy perpetually at his heels.

When he was interrupted by company, or fatigued with business, he so strongly imaged to himself the happiness of leisure and retreat, that he determined to enjoy them for the future without interruption, and to exclude for ever all that could deprive him of his darling satisfactions. He forgot, in the vehemence of desire, that solitude and quiet owe their pleasures to those miseries, which he was so studious to obviate: for such are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, hurry and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated; we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

If he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the most delightful part of the new world, it may be doubted, whether his distance from the *vanities* of life, would have enabled him to keep away the *vexations*. It is common for a man, who feels pain, to fancy that he could bear it better in any other part. Cowley having known the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily persuaded himself that nothing worse was

to be found, and that every alteration would bring some improvement: he never suspected that the cause of his unhappiness was within, that his own passions were not sufficiently regulated, and that he was harassed by his own impatience, which could never be without something to awaken it, would accompany him over the sea, and find its way to his American elysium. He would, upon the trial, have been soon convinced, that the fountain of content must spring up in the mind: and that he who has so little knowledge of human nature, as to seek happiness by changing any thing but his own dispositions, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove.*

N° 7. TUESDAY, *April* 10, 1750.

O qui perpetuâ mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator!——
Disjice terrenæ nebulas et pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere, finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus idem.—BOETHIUS.

O thou whose pow'r o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And chear the clouded mind with light divine.
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence and holy rest:
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

THE love of RETIREMENT has, in all ages, adhered closely to those minds, which have been most enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius. Those who enjoyed every thing generally supposed to confer happiness, have been forced to seek it in the shades of privacy. Though they possessed both power and riches, and were, therefore, surrounded by men who considered it as their chief interest to remove from them every thing that might offend their ease, or interrupt their pleasure, they have soon felt the languors of satiety, and found themselves unable to

* See Dr. Johnson's Life of Cowley.

pursue the race of life without frequent respirations of intermediate solitude.

To produce this disposition, nothing appears requisite but quick sensibility, and active imagination; for, though not devoted to virtue, or science, the man, whose faculties enable him to make ready comparisons of the present with the past, will find such a constant recurrence of the same pleasures and troubles, the same expectations and disappointments, that he will gladly snatch an hour of retreat, to let his thoughts expatiate at large, and seek for that variety in his own ideas, which the objects of sense cannot afford him.

Nor will greatness, or abundance, exempt him from the importunities of this desire, since, if he is born to think, he cannot restrain himself from a thousand inquiries and speculations, which he must pursue by his own reason, and which the splendour of his condition can only hinder: for those who are most exalted above dependance or control, are yet condemned to pay so large a tribute of their time to custom, ceremony, and popularity, that, according to the Greek proverb, no man in the house is more a slave than the master.

When a king asked Euclid, the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner? he was answered, That there was no royal way to geometry. Other things may be seized by might, or purchased with money, but knowledge is to be gained only by study, and study to be prosecuted only in retirement.

These are some of the motives which have had power to sequester kings and heroes from the crowds that soothed them with flatteries, or inspirited them with acclamations; but their efficacy seems confined to the higher mind, and to operate little upon the common classes of mankind, to whose conceptions the present assemblage of things is adequate, and who seldom range beyond those entertainments and vexations, which solicit their attention by pressing on their senses.

But there is an universal reason for some stated intervals

of solitude, which the institutions of the church call upon me now especially to mention; a reason which extends as wide as moral duty, or the hopes of divine favour in a future state; and which ought to influence all ranks of life, and all degrees of intellect; since none can imagine themselves not comprehended in its obligation, but such as determine to set their Maker at defiance by obstinate wickedness, or whose enthusiastick security of his approbation places them above external ordinances, and all human means of improvement.

The great task of him who conducts his life by the precepts of religion, is to make the future predominate over the present, to impress upon his mind so strong a sense of the importance of obedience to the divine will, of the value of the reward promised to virtue, and the terrours of the punishment denounced against crimes, as may overbear all the temptations which temporal hope or fear can bring in his way, and enable him to bid equal defiance to joy and sorrow, to turn away at one time from the allurements of ambition, and push forward at another against the threats of calamity.

It is not without reason that the apostle represents our passage through this stage of our existence by images drawn from the alarms and solicitude of a military life; for we are placed in such a state, that almost every thing about us conspires against our chief interest. We are in danger from whatever can get possession of our thoughts; all that can excite in us either pain or pleasure, has a tendency to obstruct the way that leads to happiness, and either to turn us aside, or retard our progress.

Our senses, our appetites, and our passions, are our lawful and faithful guides, in most things that relate solely to this life: and, therefore, by the hourly necessity of consulting them, we gradually sink into an implicit submission, and habitual confidence. Every act of compliance with their motions facilitates a second compliance, every new step towards depravity is made with less reluctance than

the former, and thus the descent to life merely sensual is perpetually accelerated.

The senses have not only that advantage over conscience, which things necessary must always have over things chosen, but they have likewise a kind of prescription in their favour. We feared pain much earlier than we apprehended guilt, and were delighted with the sensations of pleasure, before we had capacities to be charmed with the beauty of rectitude. To this power, thus early established, and incessantly increasing, it must be remembered, that almost every man has, in some part of his life, added new strength by a voluntary or negligent subjection of himself; for who is there that has not instigated his appetites by indulgence, or suffered them, by an unresisting neutrality, to enlarge their dominion, and multiply their demands?

From the necessity of dispossessing the sensitive faculties of the influence which they must naturally gain by this pre-occupation of the soul, arises that conflict between opposite desires in the first endeavours after a religious life; which, however enthusiastically it may have been described, or however contemptuously ridiculed, will naturally be felt in some degree, though varied without end, by different tempers of mind, and innumerable circumstances of health or condition, greater or less fervour, more or fewer temptations to relapse.

From the perpetual necessity of consulting the animal faculties, in our provision for the present life, arises the difficulty of withstanding their impulses, even in cases where they ought to be of no weight; for the motions of sense are instantaneous, its objects strike unsought, we are accustomed to follow its directions, and therefore often submit to the sentence without examining the authority of the judge.

Thus it appears, upon a philosophical estimate, that, supposing the mind, at any certain time, in an equipoise between the pleasures of this life, and the hopes of futurity, present objects falling more frequently into the scale, would

in time preponderate, and that our regard for an invisible state would grow every moment weaker, till at last it would lose all its activity, and become absolutely without effect.

To prevent this dreadful event, the balance is put into our own hands, and we have power to transfer the weight to either side. The motives to a life of holiness are infinite, not less than the favour or anger of Omnipotence, not less than eternity of happiness or misery. But these can only influence our conduct as they gain our attention, which the business or diversions of the world are always calling off by contrary attractions.

The great art therefore of piety, and the end for which all the rites of religion seem to be instituted, is the perpetual renovation of the motives to virtue, by a voluntary employment of our mind in the contemplation of its excellence, its importance, and its necessity, which, in proportion as they are more frequently and more willingly revolved, gain a more forcible and permanent influence, till in time they become the reigning ideas, the standing principles of action, and the test by which every thing proposed to the judgment is rejected or approved.

To facilitate this change of our affections, it is necessary that we weaken the temptations of the world, by retiring at certain seasons from it; for its influence, arising only from its presence, is much lessened when it becomes the object of solitary meditation. A constant residence amidst noise and pleasure inevitably obliterates the impressions of piety, and a frequent abstraction of ourselves into a state, where this life, like the next, operates only upon the reason, will reinstate religion in its just authority, even without those irradiations from above, the hope of which I have no intention to withdraw from the sincere and the diligent.

This is that conquest of the world and of ourselves, which has been always considered as the perfection of human nature; and this is only to be obtained by fervent

prayer, steady resolutions, and frequent retirement from folly and vanity, from the cares of avarice, and the joys of intemperance, from the lulling sounds of deceitful flattery, and the tempting sight of prosperous wickedness.

N° 8. SATURDAY, *April* 14, 1750.

—— Patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas;
Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet.—JUV.

For he that but conceives a crime in thought,
Contracts the danger of an actual fault.—CREECH.

IF the most active and industrious of mankind was able, at the close of life, to recollect distinctly his past moments, and distribute them in a regular account, according to the manner in which they have been spent, it is scarcely to be imagined how few would be marked out to the mind, by any permanent or visible effects, how small a proportion his real action would bear to his seeming possibilities of action, how many chasms he would find of wide and continued vacuity, and how many interstitial spaces unfilled, even in the most tumultuous hurries of business, and the most eager vehemence of pursuit.

It is said by modern philosophers, that not only the great globes of matter are thinly scattered through the universe, but the hardest bodies are so porous, that, if all matter were compressed to perfect solidity, it might be contained in a cube of a few feet. In like manner, if all the employment of life were crowded into the time which it really occupied, perhaps a few weeks, days, or hours, would be sufficient for its accomplishment, so far as the mind was engaged in the performance. For such is the inequality of our corporeal to our intellectual faculties, that we contrive in minutes what we execute in years, and the soul often stands an idle spectator of the labour of the hands, and expedition of the feet.

For this reason the ancient generals often found them-

selves at leisure to pursue the study of philosophy in the camp; and Lucan, with historical veracity, makes Cæsar relate of himself, that he noted the revolutions of the stars in the midst of preparations for battle.

> —— *Media inter prælia semper*
> *Sideribus, cælique plagis, superisque vacavi.*
>
> Amid the storms of war, with curious eyes
> I trace the planets and survey the skies.

That the soul always exerts her peculiar powers, with greater or less force, is very probable, though the common occasions of our present condition require but a small part of that incessant cogitation; and by the natural frame of our bodies, and general combination of the world, we are so frequently condemned to inactivity, that as through all our time we are thinking, so for a great part of our time we can only think.

Lest a power so restless should be either unprofitably or hurtfully employed, and the superfluities of intellect run to waste, it is no vain speculation to consider how we may govern our thoughts, restrain them from irregular motions, or confine them from boundless dissipation.

How the understanding is best conducted to the knowledge of science, by what steps it is to be led forwards in its pursuit, how it is to be cured of its defects, and habituated to new studies, has been the inquiry of many acute and learned men, whose observations I shall not either adopt or censure: my purpose being to consider the moral discipline of the mind, and to promote the increase of virtue rather than of learning.

This inquiry seems to have been neglected for want of remembering, that all action has its origin in the mind, and that therefore to suffer the thoughts to be vitiated, is to poison the fountains of morality; irregular desires will produce licentious practices; what men allow themselves to wish they will soon believe, and will be at last incited to execute what they please themselves with contriving.

For this reason the casuists of the Roman church, who

gain, by confession, great opportunities of knowing human nature, have generally determined that what it is a crime to do, it is a crime to think. Since by revolving with pleasure the facility, safety, or advantage of a wicked deed, a man soon begins to find his constancy relax, and his detestation soften; the happiness of success glittering before him, withdraws his attention from the atrociousness of the guilt, and acts are at last confidently perpetrated, of which the first conception only crept into the mind, disguised in pleasing complications, and permitted rather than invited.

No man has ever been drawn to crimes by love or jealousy, envy or hatred, but he can tell how easily he might at first have repelled the temptation, how readily his mind would have obeyed a call to any other object, and how weak his passion has been after some casual avocation, till he has recalled it again to his heart, and revived the viper by too warm a fondness.

Such, therefore, is the importance of keeping reason a constant guard over imagination, that we have otherwise no security for our own virtue, but may corrupt our hearts in the most recluse solitude, with more pernicious and tyrannical appetites and wishes than the commerce of the world will generally produce; for we are easily shocked by crimes which appear at once in their full magnitude; but the gradual growth of our own wickedness, endeared by interest, and palliated by all the artifices of self-deceit, gives us time to form distinctions in our own favour, and reason by degrees submits to absurdity, as the eye is in time accommodated to darkness.

In this disease of the soul, it is of the utmost importance to apply remedies at the beginning; and therefore I shall endeavour to shew what thoughts are to be rejected or improved, as they regard the past, present, or future; in hopes that some may be awakened to caution and vivilance, who, perhaps, indulge themselves in dangerous dreams, so much the more dangerous, because, being yet only dreams, they are concluded innocent.

The recollection of the past is only useful by way of

provision for the future; and therefore in reviewing all occurrences that fall under a religious consideration, it is proper that a man stop at the first thoughts, to remark how he was led thither, and why he continues the reflection. If he is dwelling with delight upon a stratagem of successful fraud, a night of licentious riot, or an intrigue of guilty pleasure, let him summon off his imagination as from an unlawful pursuit, expel those passages from his remembrance, of which, though he cannot seriously approve them, the pleasure overpowers the guilt, and refer them to a future hour, when they may be considered with greater safety. Such an hour will certainly come; for the impressions of past pleasure are always lessening, but the sense of guilt, which respects futurity, continues the same.

The serious and impartial retrospect of our conduct, is indisputably necessary to the confirmation or recovery of virtue, and is, therefore, recommended under the name of self-examination, by divines, as the first act previous to repentance. It is, indeed, of so great use, that without it we should always be to begin life, be seduced for ever by the same allurements, and misled by the same fallacies. But in order that we may not lose the advantage of our experience, we must endeavour to see every thing in its proper form, and excite in ourselves those sentiments, which the great Author of nature has decreed the concomitants or followers of good and bad actions.

Μηδ' ὕπνον μαλακοῖσιν ἐπ' ὄμμασι προσδέξασθαι,
Πρὶν τῶν ἡμερινῶν ἔργων τρὶς ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν·
Πῇ παρέβην; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη;
Ἀρξάμενος δ' ἀπὸ πρώτου ἐπέξιθι, καὶ μετέπειτα,
Δειλὰ μὲν ἐκπρήξας, ἐπιπλήσσεο, χρηστὰ δὲ, τέρπου.

"Let not sleep," says Pythagoras, "fall upon thy eyes till thou hast thrice reviewed the transactions of the past day. Where have I turned aside from rectitude? What have I been doing? What have I left undone, which I ought to have done? Begin thus from the first act, and proceed; and in conclusion, at the ill which thou hast done be troubled, and rejoice for the good."

Our thoughts on present things being determined by

the objects before us, fall not under those indulgences, or excursions, which I am now considering. But I cannot forbear, under this head, to caution pious and tender minds, that are disturbed by the irruptions of wicked imaginations, against too great dejection, and too anxious alarms; for thoughts are only criminal, when they are first chosen, and then voluntarily continued.

> Evil into the mind of God or man
> May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
> No spot or stain behind.—MILTON.

In futurity chiefly are the snares lodged, by which the imagination is intangled. Futurity is the proper abode of hope and fear, with all their train and progeny of subordinate apprehensions and desires. In futurity events and chances are yet floating at large, without apparent connexion with their causes, and we therefore easily indulge the liberty of gratifying ourselves with a pleasing choice. To pick and cull among possible advantages is, as the civil law terms it, *in vacuum venire*, to take what belongs to nobody; but it has this hazard in it, that we shall be unwilling to quit what we have seized, though an owner should be found. It is easy to think on that which may be gained, till at last we resolve to gain it, and to image the happiness of particular conditions, till we can be easy in no other. We ought, at least, to let our desires fix upon nothing in another's power for the sake of our quiet, or in another's possession for the sake of our innocence. When a man finds himself led, though by a train of honest sentiments, to wish for that to which he has no right, he should start back as from a pitfall covered with flowers. He that fancies he should benefit the publick more in a great station than the man that fills it, will in time imagine it an act of virtue to supplant him; and as opposition readily kindles into hatred, his eagerness to do that good, to which he is not called, will betray him to crimes, which in his original scheme were never proposed.

He therefore that would govern his actions by the laws of virtue, must regulate his thoughts by those of reason;

he must keep guilt from the recesses of his heart, and remember that the pleasures of fancy, and the emotions of desire, are more dangerous as they are more hidden, since they escape the awe of observation, and operate equally in every situation, without the concurrence of external opportunities.

N° 9. TUESDAY, *April* 17, 1750.

Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis.— MART.
Choose what you are; no other state prefer.—ELPHINSTON.

IT is justly remarked by Horace, that howsoever every man may complain occasionally of the hardships of his condition, he is seldom willing to change it for any other on the same level: for whether it be that he, who follows an employment, made choice of it at first on account of its suitableness to his inclination; or that when accident, or the determination of others, have placed him in a particular station, he, by endeavouring to reconcile himself to it, gets the custom of viewing it only on the fairest side; or whether every man thinks that class to which he belongs the most illustrious, merely because he has honoured it with his name; it is certain that, whatever be the reason, most men have a very strong and active prejudice in favour of their own vocation, always working upon their minds, and influencing their behaviour.

This partiality is sufficiently visible in every rank of the human species; but it exerts itself more frequently and with greater force among those who have never learned to conceal their sentiments for reasons of policy, or to model their expressions by the laws of politeness; and therefore the chief contests of wit among artificers and handicraftsmen arise from a mutual endeavour to exalt one trade by depreciating another.

From the same principles are derived many consolations to alleviate the inconveniences to which every calling is peculiarly exposed. A blacksmith was lately

pleasing himself at his anvil, with observing that, though his trade was hot and sooty, laborious and unhealthy, yet he had the honour of living by his hammer, he got his bread like a man, and if his son should rise in the world, and keep his coach, nobody could reproach him that his father was a tailor.

A man, truly zealous for his fraternity, is never so irresistibly flattered, as when some rival calling is mentioned with contempt. Upon this principle a linen-draper boasted that he had got a new customer, whom he could safely trust, for he could have no doubt of his honesty, since it was known, from unquestionable authority, that he was now filing a bill in chancery to delay payment for the clothes which he had worn the last seven years; and he himself had heard him declare, in a publick coffee-house, that he looked upon the whole generation of woollen-drapers to be such despicable wretches, that no gentleman ought to pay them.

It has been observed that physicians and lawyers are no friends to religion; and many conjectures have been formed to discover the reason of such a combination between men who agree in nothing else, and who seem less to be affected, in their own provinces, by religious opinions, than any other part of the community. The truth is, very few of them have thought about religion; but they have all seen a parson; seen him in a habit different from their own, and therefore declared war against him. A young student from the inns of court, who has often attacked the curate of his father's parish with such arguments as his acquaintances could furnish, and returned to town without success, is now gone down with a resolution to destroy him; for he has learned at last how to manage a prig, and if he pretends to hold him again to syllogism, he has a catch in reserve, which neither logick nor metaphysicks can resist.

> I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
> Will look aghast, when unforeseen destruction
> Pours in upon him thus.

The malignity of soldiers and sailors against each other has been often experienced at the cost of their country; and, perhaps, no orders of men have an enmity of more acrimony, or longer continuance. When, upon our late successes at sea, some new regulations were concerted for establishing the rank of the naval commanders, a captain of foot very acutely remarked, that nothing was more absurd than to give any honorary rewards to seamen, "for honour," says he, "ought only to be won by bravery, and all the world knows that in a sea-fight there is no danger, and therefore no evidence of courage."

But although this general desire of aggrandizing themselves, by raising their profession, betrays men to a thousand ridiculous and mischievous acts of supplantation and detraction, yet as almost all passions have their good as well as bad effects, it likewise excites ingenuity, and sometimes raises an honest and useful emulation of diligence. It may be observed in general, that no trade had ever reached the excellence to which it is now improved, had its professors looked upon it with the eyes of indifferent spectators; the advances, from the first rude essays, must have been made by men who valued themselves for performances, for which scarce any other would be persuaded to esteem them.

It is pleasing to contemplate a manufacture rising gradually from its first mean state by the successive labours of innumerable minds; to consider the first hollow trunk of an oak, in which, perhaps, the shepherd could scarce venture to cross a brook swelled with a shower, enlarged at last into a ship of war, attacking fortresses, terrifying nations, setting storms and billows at defiance, and visiting the remotest parts of the globe. And it might contribute to dispose us to a kinder regard for the labours of one another, if we were to consider from what unpromising beginnings the most useful productions of art have probably arisen. Who, when he saw the first sand or ashes, by a casual intenseness of heat, melted into a me-

talline form, rugged with excrescences, and clouded with impurities, would have imagined, that in this shapeless lump lay concealed so many conveniences of life, as would in time constitute a great part of the happiness of the world? Yet by some such fortuitous liquefaction was mankind taught to procure a body at once in a high degree solid and transparent, which might admit the light of the sun, and exclude the violence of the wind; which might extend the sight of the philosopher to new ranges of existence, and charm him at one time with the unbounded extent of the material creation, and at another with the endless subordination of animal life; and, what is yet of more importance, might supply the decays of nature, and succour old age with subsidiary sight. Thus was the first artificer in glass employed, though without his own knowledge or expectation. He was facilitating and prolonging the enjoyment of light, enlarging the avenues of science, and conferring the highest and most lasting pleasures; he was enabling the student to contemplate nature, and the beauty to behold herself.

This passion for the honour of a profession, like that for the grandeur of our own country, is to be regulated, not extinguished. Every man, from the highest to the lowest station, ought to warm his heart, and animate his endeavours with the hopes of being useful to the world, by advancing the art which it is his lot to exercise, and for that end he must necessarily consider the whole extent of its application, and the whole weight of its importance. But let him not too readily imagine that another is ill employed, because, for want of fuller knowledge of his business, he is not able to comprehend its dignity. Every man ought to endeavour at eminence, not by pulling others down, but by raising himself, and enjoy the pleasure of his own superiority, whether imaginary or real, without interrupting others in the same felicity. The philosopher may very justly be delighted with the extent of his views, and the artificer with the readiness of

his hands; but let the one remember, that, without mechanical performances, refined speculation is an empty dream, and the other, that, without theoretical reasoning, dexterity is little more than a brute instinct.

N° 10. SATURDAY, *April* 21, 1750.

Posthabui tamen illorum mea seria ludo.—VIRG.
For trifling sports I quitted grave affairs.

THE number of correspondents which increases every day upon me, shews that my paper is at least distinguished from the common productions of the press. It is no less a proof of eminence to have many enemies than many friends, and I look upon every letter, whether it contains encomiums or reproaches, as an equal attestation of rising credit. The only pain which I can feel from my correspondence, is the fear of disgusting those whose letters I shall neglect; and therefore I take this opportunity of reminding them, that in disapproving their attempts, whenever it may happen, I only return the treatment which I often receive. Besides, many particular motives influence a writer, known only to himself, or his private friends; and it may be justly concluded, that not all letters which are postponed are rejected, nor all that are rejected, critically condemned.

Having thus eased my heart of the only apprehension that sat heavy on it, I can please myself with the candour of Benevolus, who encourages me to proceed, without sinking under the anger of Flirtilla, who quarrels with me for being old and ugly, and for wanting both activity of body, and sprightliness of mind; feeds her monkey with my lucubrations, and refuses any reconciliation till I have appeared in vindication of masquerades. That she may not however imagine me without support, and left to rest wholly upon my own fortitude, I shall now publish some letters which I have received from men as

well dressed, and as handsome, as her favourite; and others from ladies, whom I sincerely believe as young, as rich, as gay, as pretty, as fashionable, and as often toasted and treated as herself.

"A SET of candid readers send their respects to the Rambler, and acknowledge his merit in so well beginning a work that may be of publick benefit. But, superior as his genius is to the impertinences of a trifling age, they cannot help a wish that he would condescend to the weakness of minds softened by perpetual amusements, and now and then throw in, like his predecessors, some papers of a gay and humorous turn. Too fair a field now lies open, with too plentiful a harvest of follies! let the chearful Thalia put in her sickle, and, singing at her work, deck her hair with red and blue."

"A LADY sends her compliments to the Rambler, and desires to know by what other name she may direct to him; what are his set of friends, his amusements; what his way of thinking, with regard to the living world, and its ways; in short, whether he is a person now alive, and in town? If he be, she will do herself the honour to write to him pretty often, and hopes, from time to time, to be the better for his advice and animadversions; for his animadversions on her neighbours at least. But, if he is a mere essayist, and troubles not himself with the manners of the age, she is sorry to tell him, that even the genius and correctness of an Addison will not secure him from neglect."

No man is so much abstracted from common life, as not to feel a particular pleasure from the regard of the female world; the candid writers of the first billet will not be offended, that my haste to satisfy a lady has hurried their address too soon out of my mind, and that I refer them for a reply to some future paper, in order to tell this curious inquirer after my other name, the answer of a

philosopher to a man, who meeting him in the street, desired to see what he carried under his cloak; *I carry it there*, says he, *that you may not see it*. But, though she is never to know my name, she may often see my face; for I am of her opinion, that a diurnal writer ought to view the world, and that he who neglects his contemporaries, may be, with justice, neglected by them.

"Lady Racket sends compliments to the Rambler, and lets him know she shall have cards at her house, every Sunday, the remainder of the season, where he will be sure of meeting all the good company in town. By this means she hopes to see his papers interspersed with living characters. She longs to see the torch of truth produced at an assembly, and to admire the charming lustre it will throw on the jewels, complexions, and behaviour of every dear creature there."

It is a rule with me to receive every offer with the same civility as it is made; and, therefore, though lady Racket may have had some reason to guess, that I seldom frequent card-tables on Sundays, I shall not insist upon an exception, which may to her appear of so little force. My business has been to view, as opportunity was offered, every place in which mankind was to be seen; but at card-tables, however brilliant, I have always thought my visit lost, for I could know nothing of the company, but their clothes and their faces. I saw their looks clouded at the beginning of every game with an uniform solicitude, now and then in its progress varied with a short triumph; at one time wrinkled with cunning, at another deadened with despondency, or by accident flushed with rage at the unskilful or unlucky play of a partner. From such assemblies, in whatever humour I happened to enter them, I was quickly forced to retire; they were too trifling for me, when I was grave, and too dull, when I was cheerful.

Yet I cannot but value myself upon this token of regard from a lady who is not afraid to stand before the torch of truth. Let her not, however, consult her curiosity more

than her prudence; but reflect a moment on the fate of Semele, who might have lived the favourite of Jupiter, if she could have been content without his thunder. It is dangerous for mortal beauty, or terrestrial virtue, to be examined by too strong a light. The torch of truth shews much that we cannot, and all that we would not see. In a face dimpled with smiles, it has often discovered malevolence and envy, and detected under jewels and brocade, the frightful forms of poverty and distress. A fine hand of cards have changed before it into a thousand spectres of sickness, misery, and vexation; and immense sums of money, while the winner counted them with transport, have at the first glimpse of this unwelcome lustre vanished from before him. If her ladyship therefore designs to continue her assembly, I would advise her to shun such dangerous experiments, to satisfy herself with common appearances, and to light up her apartments rather with myrtle, than the torch of truth.

"A MODEST young man sends his service to the author of the Rambler, and will be very willing to assist him in his work, but is sadly afraid of being discouraged by having his first essay rejected, a disgrace he has woefully experienced in every offer he had made of it to every new writer of every new paper; but he comforts himself by thinking, without vanity, that this has been from a peculiar favour of the muses, who saved his performance from being buried in trash, and reserved it to appear with lustre in the Rambler."

I am equally a friend to modesty and enterprize; and therefore shall think it an honour to correspond with a young man who possesses both in so eminent a degree. Youth is, indeed, the time in which these qualities ought chiefly to be found; modesty suits well with inexperience, and enterprize with health and vigour, and an extensive prospect of life. One of my predecessors has justly observed, that, though modesty has an amiable and winning appearance, it ought not to hinder the exertion of the ac-

tive powers, but that a man should shew under his blushes a latent resolution. This point of perfection, nice as it is, my correspondent seems to have attained. That he is modest, his own declaration may evince; and, I think, the *latent resolution* may be discovered in his letter by an acute observer. I will advise him, since he so well deserves my precepts, not to be discouraged though the Rambler should prove equally envious, or tasteless, with the rest of this fraternity. If his paper is refused, the presses of England are open, let him try the judgment of the publick. If, as it has sometimes happened in general combinations against merit, he cannot persuade the world to buy his works, he may present them to his friends; and if his friends are seized with the epidemical infatuation, and cannot find his genius, or will not confess it, let him then refer his cause to posterity, and reserve his labours for a wiser age.

Thus have I dispatched some of my correspondents in the usual manner with fair words, and general civility. But to Flirtilla, the gay Flirtilla, what shall I reply? Unable as I am to fly, at her command, over land and seas, or to supply her from week to week with the fashions of Paris, or the intrigues of Madrid, I am yet not willing to incur her further displeasure, and would save my papers from her monkey on any reasonable terms. By what propitiation, therefore, may I atone for my former gravity, and open, without trembling, the future letters of this sprightly persecutor? To write in defence of masquerades is no easy task; yet something difficult and daring may well be required, as the price of so important an approbation. I therefore consulted, in this great emergency, a man of high reputation in gay life, who having added to his other accomplishments no mean proficiency in the minute philosophy, after the fifth perusal of her letter, broke out with rapture into these words: "And can you, Mr. Rambler, stand out against this charming creature? Let her know at least, that from this moment Nigrinus devotes his life and his labours to her service. Is there any stubborn prejudice of education, that stands between thee

and the most amiable of mankind? Behold, Flirtilla, at thy feet, a man grown gray in the study of those noble arts by which right and wrong may be confounded; by which reason may be blinded, when we have a mind to escape from her inspection; and caprice and appetite instated in uncontrouled command, and boundless dominion! Such a casuist may surely engage, with certainty of success, in vindication of an entertainment, which in an instant gives confidence to the timorous, and kindles ardour in the cold; an entertainment where the vigilance of jealousy has so often been eluded, and the virgin is set free from the necessity of languishing in silence; where all the outworks of chastity are at once demolished; where the heart is laid open without a blush; where bashfulness may survive virtue, and no wish is crushed under the frown of modesty. Far weaker influence than Flirtilla's might gain over an advocate for such amusements. It was declared by Pompey, that if the commonwealth was violated, he could stamp with his foot, and raise an army out of the ground; if the rights of pleasure are again invaded, let but Flirtilla crack her fan, neither pens, nor swords, shall be wanting at the summons; the wit and the colonel shall march out at her command, and neither law nor reason shall stand before us."*

N° 11. TUESDAY, *April* 24, 1750.

Non Dindymene, non adytis quatit
Mentem sacerdotum incola Pythius,
Non Liber æque, non acuta
Sic geminant Corybantes æra,
Tristes ut iræ.————HOR.

Yet O! remember, nor the god of wine,
Nor Pythian Phœbus from his inmost shrine,
Nor Dindymene, nor her priests possest,
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast,
Like furious anger.—FRANCIS.

THE maxim which Periander or Corinth, one of the seven sages of Greece, left as a memorial of his knowledge and

* The four billets in this paper were the production of Miss Mulso, afterwards Mrs. Chapone.

benevolence, was χόλου κράτει, *Be master of thy anger.* He considered anger as the great disturber of human life, the chief enemy both of publick happiness and private tranquillity, and thought that he could not lay on posterity a stronger obligation to reverence his memory, than by leaving them a salutary caution against this outrageous passion.

To what latitude Periander might extend the word, the brevity of his precept will scarce allow us to conjecture. From anger, in its full import, protracted into malevolence, and exerted in revenge, arise, indeed, many of the evils to which the life of man is exposed. By anger operating upon power are produced the subversion of cities, the desolation of countries, the massacre of nations, and all those dreadful and astonishing calamities which fill the histories of the world, and which could not be read at any distant point of time, when the passions stand neutral, and every motive and principle is left to its natural force, without some doubt of the truth of the relation, did we not see the same causes still tending to the same effects, and only acting with less vigour for want of the same concurrent opportunities.

But this gigantick and enormous species of anger falls not properly under the animadversion of a writer, whose chief end is the regulation of common life, and whose precepts are to recommend themselves by their general use. Nor is this essay intended to expose the tragical or fatal effects even of private malignity. The anger which I propose now for my subject, is such as makes those who indulge it more troublesome than formidable, and ranks them rather with hornets and wasps, than with basilisks and lions. I have, therefore, prefixed a motto, which characterises this passion, not so much by the mischief that it causes, as by the noise that it utters.

There is in the world a certain class of mortals, known and contentedly known, by the appellation of *passionate men*, who imagine themselves entitled by that distinction to be provoked on every slight occasion, and to vent their

rage in vehement and fierce vociferations, in furious menaces and licentious reproaches. Their rage, indeed, for the most part, fumes away in outcries of injury, and protestations of vengeance, and seldom proceeds to actual violence, unless a drawer or linkboy falls in their way; but they interrupt the quiet of those that happen to be within the reach of their clamours, obstruct the course of conversation, and disturb the enjoyment of society.

Men of this kind are sometimes not without understanding or virtue, and are, therefore, not always treated with the severity which their neglect of the ease of all about them might justly provoke; they have obtained a kind of prescription for their folly, and are considered by their companions as under a predominant influence that leaves them not masters of their conduct or language, as acting without consciousness, and rushing into mischief with a mist before their eyes; they are therefore pitied rather than censured, and their sallies are passed over as the involuntary blows of a man agitated by the spasms of a convulsion.

It is surely not to be observed without indignation, that men may be found of minds mean enough to be satisfied with this treatment; wretches who are proud to obtain the privilege of madmen, and can, without shame, and without regret, consider themselves as receiving hourly pardons from their companions, and giving them continual opportunities of exercising their patience, and boasting their clemency.

Pride is undoubtedly the original of anger; but pride, like every other passion, if it once breaks loose from reason, counteracts its own purposes. A passionate man, upon the review of his day, will have very few gratifications to offer to his pride, when he has considered how his outrages were caused, why they were borne, and in what they are likely to end at last.

Those sudden bursts of rage generally break out upon small occasions; for life, unhappy as it is, cannot supply great evils as frequently as the man of fire thinks it fit to

be enraged; therefore the first reflection upon his violence must shew him that he is mean enough to be driven from his post by every petty incident, that he is the mere slave of casualty, and that his reason and virtue are in the power of the wind.

One motive there is of these loud extravagancies, which a man is careful to conceal from others, and does not always discover to himself. He that finds his knowledge narrow, and his arguments weak, and by consequence his suffrage not much regarded, is sometimes in hope of gaining that attention by his clamours which he cannot otherwise obtain, and is pleased with remembering that at least he made himself heard, that he had the power to interrupt those whom he could not confute, and suspend the decision which he could not guide.

Of this kind is the fury to which many men give way among their servants and domesticks; they feel their own ignorance, they see their own insignificance; and therefore they endeavour by their fury to fright away contempt from before them, when they know it must follow them behind; and think themselves eminently masters, when they see one folly tamely complied with, only lest refusal or delay should provoke them to a greater.

These temptations cannot but be owned to have some force. It is so little pleasing to any man to see himself wholly overlooked in the mass of things, that he may be allowed to try a few expedients for procuring some kind of supplemental dignity, and use some endeavour to add weight, by the violence of his temper, to the lightness of his other powers. But this has now been long practised, and found, upon the most exact estimate, not to produce advantages equal to its inconveniences; for it appears not that a man can by uproar, tumult, and bluster, alter any one's opinion of his understanding, or gain influence, except over those whom fortune or nature have made his dependants. He may, by a steady perseverance in his ferocity, fright his children, and harass his servants, but the rest of the world will look on and laugh; and he will have

the comfort at last of thinking, that he lives only to raise contempt and hatred, emotions to which wisdom and virtue would be always unwilling to give occasion. He has contrived only to make those fear him, whom every reasonable being is endeavouring to endear by kindness, and must content himself with the pleasure of a triumph obtained by trampling on them who could not resist. He must perceive that the apprehension which his presence causes, is not the awe of his virtue, but the dread of his brutality, and that he has given up the felicity of being loved, without gaining the honour of being reverenced.

But this is not the only ill consequence of the frequent indulgence of this blustering passion, which a man, by often calling to his assistance, will teach in a short time to intrude before the summons, to rush upon him with resistless violence, and without any previous notice of its approach. He will find himself liable to be inflamed at the first touch of provocation, and unable to retain his resentment till he has a full conviction of the offence, to proportion his anger to the cause, or to regulate it by prudence or by duty. When a man has once suffered his mind to be thus vitiated, he becomes one of the most hateful and unhappy beings. He can give no security to himself that he shall not, at the next interview, alienate by some sudden transport his dearest friend; or break out upon some slight contradiction, into such terms of rudeness as can never be perfectly forgotten. Whoever converses with him, lives with the suspicion and solicitude of a man that plays with a tame tiger, always under a necessity of watching the moment in which the capricious savage shall begin to growl.

It is told by Prior, in a panegyrick on the earl of Dorset, that his servants used to put themselves in his way when he was angry, because he was sure to recompense them for any indignities which he made them suffer. This is the round of a passionate man's life; he contracts debts when he is furious, which his virtue, if he has virtue, obliges him to discharge at the return of reason. He spends

his time in outrage and acknowledgment, injury and reparation. Or, if there be any who hardens himself in oppression, and justifies the wrong, because he has done it, his insensibility can make small part of his praise, or his happiness; he only adds deliberate to hasty folly, aggravates petulance by contumacy, and destroys the only plea that he can offer for the tenderness and patience of mankind.

Yet, even this degree of depravity we may be content to pity, because it seldom wants a punishment equal to its guilt. Nothing is more despicable or more miserable than the old age of a passionate man. When the vigour of youth fails him, and his amusements pall with frequent repetition, his occasional rage sinks by decay of strength into peevishness; that peevishness, for want of novelty and variety, becomes habitual; the world falls off from around him, and he is left, as Homer expresses it, *φθινύθων φίλον κῆρ*, to devour his own heart in solitude and contempt.

N° 12. SATURDAY, *April* 28, 1750.

——Miserum parva stipe focilat, ut pudibundos
Exercere sales inter convivia possit.——
————Tu mitis, et acri
Asperitate carens, positoque per omnia fastu,
Inter ut æquales unus numeraris amicos,
Obsequiumque doces, et amorem quæris amando.

Lucanus *ad* Pisonem.

Unlike the ribald whose licentious jest
Pollutes his banquet, and insults his guest;
From wealth and grandeur easy to descend,
Thou joy'st to lose the master in the friend:
We round thy board the cheerful menials see,
Gay with the smile of bland equality;
No social care the gracious lord disdains;
Love prompts to love, and rev'rence rev'rence gains.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you seem to have devoted your labours to virtue, I cannot forbear to inform you of one species of cruelty with which the life of a man of letters perhaps does not often

make him acquainted; and which, as it seems to produce no other advantage to those that practise it than a short gratification of thoughtless vanity, may become less common when it has been once exposed in its various forms, and its full magnitude.

I am the daughter of a country gentleman, whose family is numerous, and whose estate, not at first sufficient to supply us with affluence, has been lately so much impaired by an unsuccessful law-suit, that all the younger children are obliged to try such means as their education affords them, for procuring the necessaries of life. Distress and curiosity concurred to bring me to London, where I was received by a relation with the coldness which misfortune generally finds. A week, a long week, I lived with my cousin, before the most vigilant inquiry could procure us the least hopes of a place, in which time I was much better qualified to bear all the vexations of servitude. The first two days she was content to pity me, and only wished I had not been quite so well bred; but people must comply with their circumstances. This lenity, however, was soon at an end; and, for the remaining part of the week, I heard every hour of the pride of my family, the obstinacy of my father, and of people better born than myself that were common servants.

At last, on Saturday noon, she told me, with very visible satisfaction, that Mrs. Bombasine, the great silk-mercer's lady, wanted a maid, and a fine place it would be, for there would be nothing to do but to clean my mistress's room, get up her linen, dress the young ladies, wait at tea in the morning, take care of a little miss just come from nurse, and then sit down to my needle. But madam was a woman of great spirit, and would not be contradicted, and therefore I should take care, for good places were not easily to be got.

With these cautions I waited on madam Bombasine, of whom the first sight gave me no ravishing ideas. She was two yards round the waist, her voice was at once loud and squeaking, and her face brought to my mind the

picture of the full moon. Are you the young woman, says she, that are come to offer yourself? It is strange when people of substance want a servant, how soon it is the town-talk. But they know they shall have a belly-full that live with me. Not like people at the other end of the town, we dine at one o'clock. But I never take any body without a character; what friends do you come of? I then told her that my father was a gentleman, and that we had been unfortunate.—A great misfortune indeed, to come to me, and have three meals a-day!—So your father was a gentleman, and you are a gentlewoman, I suppose—such gentlewomen!—Madam, I did not mean to claim any exemptions, I only answered your inquiry--Such gentlewomen! people should set their children to good trades, and keep them off the parish. Pray go to the other end of the town, there are gentlewomen, if they would pay their debts: I am sure we have lost enough by gentlewomen. Upon this, her broad face grew broader with triumph, and I was afraid she would have taken me for the pleasure of continuing her insult; but happily the next word was, Pray, Mrs. gentlewoman, troop down stairs.—You may believe I obeyed her.

I returned, and met with a better reception from my cousin than I expected; for while I was out, she had heard that Mrs. Standish, whose husband had lately been raised from a clerk in an office, to be commissioner of the excise, had taken a fine house, and wanted a maid.

To Mrs. Standish I went, and, after having waited six hours, was at last admitted to the top of the stairs, when she came out of her room, with two of her company. There was a smell of punch. So, young woman, you want a place; whence do you come?—From the country, madam.—Yes, they all come out of the country. And what brought you to town, a bastard? Where do you lodge? At the Seven-Dials? What, you never heard of the foundling-house! Upon this, they all laughed so obstreperously, that I took the opportunity of sneaking off in the tumult.

I then heard of a place at an elderly lady's. She was at cards; but in two hours, I was told, she would speak to me. She asked me if I could keep an account, and ordered me to write. I wrote two lines out of some book that lay by her. She wondered what people meant, to breed up poor girls to write at that rate. I suppose, Mrs. Flirt, if I was to see your work, it would be fine stuff!—You may walk. I will not have love-letters written from my house to every young fellow in the street.

Two days after, I went on the same pursuit to Lady Lofty, dressed as I was directed, in what little ornaments I had, because she had lately got a place at court. Upon the first sight of me, she turns to the woman that shewed me in, Is this the lady that wants a place? Pray what place would you have, miss? a maid of honour's place? Servants now a-days!—Madam, I heard you wanted—Wanted what? Somebody finer than myself? A pretty servant indeed—I should be afraid to speak to her—I suppose, Mrs. Minx, these fine hands cannot bear wetting—A servant indeed! Pray move off—I am resolved to be the head person in this house—You are ready dressed, the taverns will be open.

I went to inquire for the next place in a clean linen gown, and heard the servant tell his lady, there was a young woman, but he saw she would not do. I was brought up, however. Are you the trollop that has the impudence to come for my place? What, you have hired that nasty gown, and are come to steal a better!—Madam, I have another, but being obliged to walk—Then these are your manners, with your blushes, and your courtesies, to come to me in your worst gown? Madam, give me leave to wait upon you in my other. Wait on me, you saucy slut! Then you are sure of coming? I could not let such a drab come near me—Here, you girl, that came up with her, have you touched her? If you have, wash your hands before you dress me—Such trollops! Get you down. What, whimpering? Pray walk.

I went away with tears; for my cousin had lost all

patience. However, she told me, that having a respect for my relations, she was willing to keep me out of the street, and would let me have another week.

The first day of this week I saw two places. At one I was asked where I had lived? And upon my answer, was told by the lady, that people should qualify themselves in ordinary places, for she should never have done if she was to follow girls about. At the other house I was a smirking hussy, and that sweet face I might make money of—For her part, it was a rule with her never to take any creature that thought herself handsome.

The three next days were spent in Lady Bluff's entry, where I waited six hours every day for the pleasure of seeing the servants peep at me, and go away laughing.—Madam will stretch her small shanks in the entry; she will know the house again.—At sunset the two first days I was told, that my lady would see me to-morrow, and on the third, that her woman staid.

My week was now near its end, and I had no hopes of a place. My relation, who always laid upon me the blame of every miscarriage, told me that I must learn to humble myself, and that all great ladies had particular ways; that if I went on in that manner, she could not tell who would keep me; she had known many that had refused places, sell their clothes, and beg in the streets.

It was to no purpose that the refusal was declared by me to be never on my side; I was reasoning against interest, and against stupidity; and therefore I comforted myself with the hope of succeeding better in my next attempt, and went to Mrs. Courtly, a very fine lady, who had routes at her house, and saw the best company in town.

I had not waited two hours before I was called up, and found Mr. Courtly and his lady at piquet, in the height of good humour. This I looked on as a favourable sign, and stood at the lower end of the room, in expectation of the common questions. At last Mr. Courtly called out,

after a whisper, Stand facing the light, that one may see you. I changed my place, and blushed. They frequently turned their eyes upon me, and seemed to discover many subjects of merriment; for at every look they whispered, and laughed with the most violent agitations of delight. At last Mr. Courtly cried out, Is that colour your own, child? Yes, says the lady, if she has not robbed the kitchen hearth. This was so happy a conceit, that it renewed the storm of laughter, and they threw down their cards in hopes of better sport. The lady then called me to her, and began with an affected gravity to inquire what I could do? But first turn about, and let us see your fine shape: Well, what are you fit for, Mrs. Mum? You would find your tongue, I suppose, in the kitchen. No, no, says Mr. Courtly, the girl's a good girl yet, but I am afraid a brisk young fellow, with fine tags on his shoulder——Come, child, hold up your head; what? you have stole nothing.——Not yet, says the lady, but she hopes to steal your heart quickly.—Here was a laugh of happiness and triumph, prolonged by the confusion which I could no longer repress. At last the lady recollected herself; Stole! no—but if I had her, I should watch her: for that downcast eye—Why cannot you look people in the face? Steal! says her husband, she would steal nothing but, perhaps, a few ribands before they were left off by her lady. Sir, answered I, why should you, by supposing me a thief, insult one from whom you have received no injury? Insult! says the lady; are you come here to be a servant, you saucy baggage, and talk of insulting? What will this world come to, if a gentleman may not jest with a servant! Well, such servants! pray be gone, and see when you will have the honour to be so insulted again. Servants insulted!—a fine time.—Insulted! Get down stairs, you slut, or the footman shall insult you.

The last day of the last week was now coming, and my kind cousin talked of sending me down in the waggon to preserve me from bad courses. But in the morn-

ing she came and told me that she had one trial more for me; Euphemia wanted a maid, and perhaps I might do for her; for, like me, she must fall her crest, being forced to lay down her chariot upon the loss of half her fortune by bad securities, and with her way of giving her money to every body that pretended to want it, she could have little beforehand; therefore I might serve her; for, with all her fine sense, she must not pretend to be nice.

I went immediately, and met at the door a young gentlewoman, who told me she had herself been hired that morning, but that she was ordered to bring any that offered up stairs. I was accordingly introduced to Euphemia, who, when I came in, laid down her book, and told me, that she sent for me not to gratify an idle curiosity, but lest my disappointment might be made still more grating by incivility; that she was in pain to deny any thing, much more what was no favour; that she saw nothing in my appearance which did not make her wish for my company; but that another, whose claims might perhaps be equal, had come before me. The thought of being so near to such a place, and missing it, brought tears into my eyes, and my sobs hindered me from returning my acknowledgments. She rose up confused, and supposing by my concern that I was distressed, placed me by her, and made me tell her my story: which when she had heard, she put two guineas in my hand, ordering me to lodge near her, and make use of her table till she could provide for me. I am now under her protection, and know not how to shew my gratitude better than by giving this account to the RAMBLER.

ZOSIMA.

N° 13. Tuesday, *May* 1, 1750.

Commissumque teges et vino tortus et irâ.—Hor.

And let not wine or anger wrest
Th' intrusted secret from your breast.—Francis.

It is related by Quintus Curtius, that the Persians always conceived an invincible contempt of a man who had violated the laws of secrecy; for they thought, that, however he might be deficient in the qualities requisite to actual excellence, the negative virtues at least were in his power, and though he perhaps could not speak well if he was to try, it was still easy for him not to speak.

In forming this opinion of the easiness of secrecy, they seem to have considered it as opposed, not to treachery, but loquacity, and to have conceived the man whom they thus censured, not frighted by menaces to reveal, or bribed by promises to betray, but incited by the mere pleasure of talking, or some other motive equally trifling, to lay open his heart without reflection, and to let whatever he knew slip from him, only for want of power to retain it. Whether, by their settled and avowed scorn of thoughtless talkers, the Persians were able to diffuse to any great extent the virtue of taciturnity, we are hindered by the distance of those times from being able to discover, there being very few memoirs remaining of the court of Persepolis, nor any distinct accounts handed down to us of their office-clerks, their ladies of the bedchamber, their attorneys, their chambermaids, or their footmen.

In these latter ages, though the old animosity against a prattler is still retained, it appears wholly to have lost its effect upon the conduct of mankind, for secrets are so seldom kept, that it may with some reason be doubted, whether the ancients were not mistaken in their first postulate, whether the quality of retention be so generally bestowed, and whether a secret has not some subtle volatility, by which it escapes imperceptibly at the smallest

vent, or some power of fermentation, by which it expands itself so as to burst the heart that will not give it way.

Those that study either the body or the mind of a man, very often find the most specious and pleasing theory falling under the weight of contrary experience; and instead of gratifying their vanity by inferring effects from causes, they are always reduced at last to conjecture causes from effects. That it is easy to be secret, the speculatist can demonstrate in his retreat, and therefore thinks himself justified in placing confidence; the man of the world knows, that, whether difficult or not, it is uncommon, and therefore finds himself rather inclined to search after the reason of this universal failure in one of the most important duties of society.

The vanity of being known to be trusted with a secret, is generally one of the chief motives to disclose it; for, however absurd it may be thought to boast an honour by an act which shews that it was conferred without merit, yet most men seem rather inclined to confess the want of virtue than of importance, and more willingly shew their influence, though at the expence of their probity, than glide through life with no other pleasure than the private consciousness of fidelity; which, while it is preserved, must be without praise, except from the single person who tries and knows it.

There are many ways of telling a secret, by which a man exempts himself from the reproaches of his conscience, and gratifies his pride, without suffering himself to believe that he impairs his virtue. He tells the private affairs of his patron, or his friend, only to those from whom he would not conceal his own; he tells them to those who have no temptation to betray the trust, or with a denunciation of a certain forfeiture of his friendship, if he discovers that they become publick.

Secrets are very frequently told in the first ardour of kindness, or of love, for the sake of proving, by so important a sacrifice, sincerity or tenderness; but with this motive, though it be strong in itself, vanity concurs, since

every man desires to be most esteemed by those whom he loves, or with whom he converses, with whom he passes his hours of pleasure, and to whom he retires from business and from care.

When the discovery of secrets is under consideration, there is always a distinction carefully to be made between our own and those of another; those of which we are fully masters, as they affect only our own interest, and those which are reposited with us in trust, and involve the happiness or convenience of such as we have no right to expose to hazard. To tell our own secrets is generally folly, but that folly is without guilt; to communicate those with which we are intrusted is always treachery, and treachery for the most part combined with folly.

There have, indeed, been some enthusiastic and irrational zealots for friendship, who have maintained, and perhaps believed, that one friend has a right to all that is in possession of another; and that therefore it is a violation of kindness to exempt any secret from this boundless confidence. Accordingly, a late female minister of state* has been shameless enough to inform the world, that she used, when she wanted to extract any thing from her sovereign, to remind her of Montaigne's reasoning, who has determined, that to tell a secret to a friend is no breach of fidelity, because the number of persons trusted is not multiplied, a man and his friend being virtually the same.

That such a fallacy could be imposed upon any human understanding, or that an author could have advanced a position so remote from truth and reason, any other ways than as a declaimer, to shew to what extent he could stretch his imagination, and with what strength he could press his principle, would scarcely have been credible, had not this lady kindly shewn us how far weakness may be deluded, or indolence amused. But since it appears, that even this sophistry has been able, with the help of a strong desire, to repose in quiet upon the understanding of another, to mislead honest intentions, and an under-

* Duchess of Marlborough.

standing not contemptible,* it may not be superfluous to remark, that those things which are common among friends are only such as either possesses in his own right, and can alienate or destroy without injury to any other person. Without this limitation confidence must run on without end; the second person may tell the secret to the third, upon the same principle as he received it from the first, and a third may hand it forward to a fourth, till at last it is told in the round of friendship to them from whom it was the first intention to conceal it.

The confidence which Caius has of the faithfulness of Titius is nothing more than an opinion which himself cannot know to be true, and which Claudius, who first tells his secret to Caius, may know to be false; and therefore the trust is transferred by Caius, if he reveal what has been told him, to one from whom the person originally concerned would have withheld it; and whatever may be the event, Caius has hazarded the happiness of his friend, without necessity and without permission, and has put that trust in the hand of fortune, which was given only to virtue.

All the arguments upon which a man, who is telling the private affairs of another, may ground his confidence of security, he must upon reflection know to be uncertain, because he finds them without effect upon himself. When he is imagining that Titius will be cautious, from a regard to his interest, his reputation, or his duty, he ought to reflect that he is himself at that instant acting in opposition to all these reasons, and revealing what interest, reputation, and duty, direct him to conceal.

Every one feels that in his own case he should consider the man incapable of trust, who believed himself at liberty to tell whatever he knew to the first whom he should conclude deserving of his confidence; therefore Caius, in admitting Titius to the affairs imparted only to himself, must know that he violates his faith, since he acts contrary to the intention of Claudius, to whom that faith was given. For promises of friendship are, like all others, useless and

* That of Queen Anne.

vain, unless they are made in some known sense, adjusted and acknowledged by both parties.

I am not ignorant that many questions may be started relating to the duty of secrecy, where the affairs are of publick concern; where subsequent reasons may arise to alter the appearance and nature of the trust; that the manner in which the secret was told may change the degree of obligation, and that the principles upon which a man is chosen for a confidant may not always equally constrain him. But these scruples, if not too intricate, are of too extensive consideration for my present purpose, nor are they such as generally occur in common life; and though casuistical knowledge be useful in proper hands, yet it ought by no means to be carelessly exposed, since most will use it rather to lull than to awaken their own consciences; and the threads of reasoning, on which truth is suspended, are frequently drawn to such subtility, that common eyes cannot perceive, and common sensibility cannot feel them.

The whole doctrine, as well as practice of secrecy, is so perplexing and dangerous, that next to him who is compelled to trust, I think him unhappy who is chosen to be trusted; for he is often involved in scruples without the liberty of calling in the help of any other understanding; he is frequently drawn into guilt, under the appearance of friendship and honesty; and sometimes subjected to suspicion by the treachery of others, who are engaged without his knowledge in the same schemes; for he that has one confidant has generally more, and when he is at last betrayed, is in doubt on whom he shall fix the crime.

The rules therefore that I shall propose concerning secrecy, and from which I think it not safe to deviate, without long and exact deliberation, are—Never to solicit the knowledge of a secret. Not willingly, nor without many limitations, to accept such confidence when it is offered. When a secret is once admitted, to consider the trust as of a very high nature, important as society, and sacred as truth, and therefore not to be violated for any incidental convenience, or slight appearance of contrary fitness.

N° 14. SATURDAY, *May* 5, 1750.

—— *Nil fuit unquam*
Sic dispar sibi ——HOR.

Sure such a various creature ne'er was known.—FRANCIS.

AMONG the many inconsistencies which folly produces, or infirmity suffers, in the human mind, there has often been observed a manifest and striking contrariety between the life of an author and his writings; and Milton, in a letter to a learned stranger, by whom he had been visited, with great reason congratulates himself upon the consciousness of being found equal to his own character, and having preserved, in a private and familiar interview, that reputation which his works had procured him.

Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose performances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity; the bubble that sparkled before them has become common water at the touch; the phantom of perfection has vanished when they wished to press it to their bosom. They have lost the pleasure of imagining how far humanity may be exalted, and, perhaps, felt themselves less inclined to toil up the steeps of virtue, when they observe those who seem best able to point the way, loitering below, as either afraid of the labour, or doubtful of the reward.

It has been long the custom of the oriental monarchs to hide themselves in gardens and palaces, to avoid the conversation of mankind, and to be known to their subjects only by their edicts. The same policy is no less necessary to him that writes, than to him that governs; for men would not more patiently submit to be taught, than commanded, by one known to have the same follies and weaknesses with themselves. A sudden intruder into the closet of an author would perhaps feel equal indignation with the officer, who having long solicited admission into the

presence of Sardanapalus, saw him not consulting upon laws, inquiring into grievances, or modelling armies, but employed in feminine amusements, and directing the ladies in their work.

It is not difficult to conceive, however, that for many reasons a man writes much better than he lives. For without entering into refined speculations, it may be shewn much easier to design than to perform. A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the enticements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear, and is in the same state with him that teaches upon land the art of navigation, to whom the sea is always smooth, and the wind always prosperous.

The mathematicians are well acquainted with the difference between pure science, which has to do only with ideas, and the application of its laws to the use of life, in which they are constrained to submit to the imperfection of matter and the influence of accidents. Thus, in moral discussions, it is to be remembered that many impediments obstruct our practice, which very easily give way to theory. The speculatist is only in danger of erroneous reasoning; but the man involved in life, has his own passions, and those of others, to encounter, and is embarrassed with a thousand inconveniencies, which confound him with variety of impulse, and either perplex or obstruct his way. He is forced to act without deliberation, and obliged to choose before he can examine: he is surprised by sudden alterations of the state of things, and changes his measures according to superficial appearances; he is led by others, either because he is indolent, or because he is timorous; he is sometimes afraid to know what is right, and sometimes finds friends or enemies diligent to deceive him.

We are, therefore, not to wonder that most fail, amidst tumult, and snares, and danger, in the observance of those precepts, which they lay down in solitude, safety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiassed, and with liberty unobstructed. It is the condition of our present state to see

more than we can attain; the exactest vigilance and caution can never maintain a single day of unmingled innocence, much less can the utmost efforts of incorporated mind reach the summit of speculative virtue.

It is, however, necessary for the idea of perfection to be proposed, that we may have some object to which our endeavours are to be directed; and he that is most deficient in the duties of life, makes some atonement for his faults, if he warns others against his own failings, and hinders, by the salubrity of his admonitions, the contagion of his example.

Nothing is more unjust, however common, than to charge with hypocrisy him that expresses zeal for those virtues which he neglects to practise; since he may be sincerely convinced of the advantages of conquering his passions, without having yet obtained the victory, as a man may be confident of the advantages of a voyage, or a journey, without having courage or industry to undertake it, and may honestly recommend to others, those attempts which he neglects himself.

The interest which the corrupt part of mankind have in hardening themselves against every motive to amendment, has disposed them to give to these contradictions, when they can be produced against the cause of virtue, that weight which they will not allow them in any other case. They see men act in opposition to their interest, without supposing, that they do not know it; those who give way to the sudden violence of passion, and forsake the most important pursuits for petty pleasures, are not supposed to have changed their opinions, or to approve their own conduct. In moral or religious questions alone, they determine the sentiments by the actions, and charge every man with endeavouring to impose upon the world, whose writings are not confirmed by his life. They never consider that themselves neglect or practise something every day inconsistently with their own settled judgment, nor discover that the conduct of the advocates for virtue can little increase, or lessen, the obligations of their dictates:

argument is to be invalidated only by argument, and is in itself of the same force, whether or not it convinces him by whom it is proposed.

Yet since this prejudice, however unreasonable, is always likely to have some prevalence, it is the duty of every man to take care lest he should hinder the efficacy of his own instructions. When he desires to gain the belief of others, he should show that he believes himself; and when he teaches the fitness of virtue by his reasonings, he should, by his example, prove its possibility: Thus much at least may be required of him, that he shall not act worse than others because he writes better, nor imagine that, by the merit of his genius, he may claim indulgence beyond mortals of the lower classes, and be excused for want of prudence, or neglect of virtue.

Bacon, in his history of the winds, after having offered something to the imagination as desirable, often proposes lower advantages in its place to the reason as attainable. The same method may be sometimes pursued in moral endeavours, which this philosopher has observed in natural inquiries; having first set positive and absolute excellence before us, we may be pardoned though we sink down to humbler virtue, trying, however, to keep our point always in view, and struggling not to lose ground, though we cannot gain it.

It is recorded of Sir Mathew Hale, that he, for a long time, concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest by some flagitious and shameful action, he should bring piety in disgrace. For the same reason it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he shall not inforce his own maxims by his domestick character, to conceal his name, that he may not injure them.

There are, indeed, a great number whose curiosity to gain a more familiar knowledge of successful writers, is not so much prompted by an opinion of their power to improve as to delight, and who expect from them not arguments against vice, or dissertations on temperance or jus-

tice, but flights of wit, and sallies of pleasantry, or, at least, acute remarks, nice distinctions, justness of sentiment, and elegance of diction.

This expectation is, indeed, specious and probable, and yet, such is the fate of all human hopes, that it is very often frustrated, and those who raise admiration by their books, disgust by their company. A man of letters for the most part spends in the privacies of study, that season of life in which the manners are to be softened into ease, and polished into elegance; and, when he has gained knowledge enough to be respected, has neglected the minuter acts by which he might have pleased. When he enters life, if his temper be soft and timorous, he is diffident and bashful, from the knowledge of his defects; or if he was born with spirit and resolution, he is ferocious and arrogant, from the consciousness of his merit: he is either dissipated by the awe of company, and unable to recollect his reading, and arrange his arguments; or he is hot and dogmatical, quick in opposition, and tenacious in defence, disabled by his own violence, and confused by his haste to triumph.

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds, and though he who excels in one might have been, with opportunities and application, equally successful in the other, yet as many please by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method, and more laboured beauties, which composition requires; so it is very possible that men, wholly accustomed to works of study, may be without that readiness of conception, and affluence of language always necessary to colloquial entertainment. They may want address to watch the hints which conversation offers for the display of their particular attainments, or they may be so much unfurnished with matter on common subjects, that discourse not professedly literary, glides over them as heterogeneous bodies, without admitting their conceptions to mix in the circulation.

A transition from an author's book to his conversation, is too often like an entrance into a large city, after a distant prospect. Remotely, we see nothing but spires of

temples and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendour, grandeur, and magnificence; but, when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarrassed with obstructions, and clouded with smoke.

N° 15. TUESDAY, *May* 8, 1750.

Et quando uberior vitiorum copia? Quando
Major avaritiæ patuit sinus? Alea quando
Hos animos?——JUV.

What age so large a crop of vices bore,
Or when was avarice extended more?
When were the dice with more profusion thrown?—DRYDEN.

THERE is no grievance, publick or private, of which, since I took upon me the office of a periodical monitor, I have received so many, or so earnest complaints, as of the predominance of play; of a fatal passion for cards and dice, which seems to have overturned, not only the ambition of excellence, but the desire of pleasure; to have extinguished the flames of the lover, as well as of the patriot; and threatens, in its further progress, to destroy all distinctions, both of rank and sex, to crush all emulation but that of fraud, to corrupt all those classes of our people, whose ancestors have, by their virtue, their industry, or their parsimony, given them the power of living in extravagance, idleness, and vice, and to leave them without knowledge, but of the modish games, and without wishes, but for lucky hands.

I have found by long experience, that there are few enterprises so hopeless as contests with the fashion, in which the opponents are not only made confident by their numbers, and strong by their union, but are hardened by contempt of their antagonist, whom they always look upon as a wretch of low notions, contracted views, mean conversation, and narrow fortune, who envies the elevations which he cannot reach, who would gladly imbitter the happiness which his inelegance or indigence deny him to partake, and who has no other end in his advice than to

revenge his own mortification by hindering those, whom their birth and taste have set above him, from the enjoyment of their superiority, and bringing them down to a level with himself.

Though I have never found myself much affected by this formidable censure, which I have incurred often enough to be acquainted with its full force, yet I shall, in some measure, obviate it on this occasion, by offering very little in my own name, either of argument or intreaty, since those who suffer by this general infatuation may be supposed best able to relate its effects.

SIR,

THERE seems to be so little knowledge left in the world, and so little of that reflection practised, by which knowledge is to be gained, that I am in doubt whether I shall be understood, when I complain of want of opportunity for thinking; or whether a condemnation, which at present seems irreversible, to perpetual ignorance, will raise any compassion, either in you, or your readers: yet I will venture to lay my state before you, because I believe it is natural, to most minds, to take some pleasure in complaining of evils, of which they have no reason to be ashamed.

I am the daughter of a man of great fortune, whose diffidence of mankind, and, perhaps, the pleasure of continual accumulation, incline him to reside upon his own estate, and to educate his children in his own house, where I was bred, if not with the most brilliant examples of virtue before my eyes, at least remote enough from any incitements to vice; and wanting neither leisure nor books, nor the acquaintance of some persons of learning in the neighbourhood, I endeavoured to acquire such knowledge as might most recommend me to esteem, and thought myself able to support a conversation upon most of the subjects, which my sex and condition made it proper for me to understand.

I had, besides my knowledge, as my mamma and my maid told me, a very fine face, and elegant shape, and

with all these advantages had been seventeen months the reigning toast for twelve miles round, and never came to the monthly assembly, but I heard the old ladies that sat by wishing that *it might end well*, and their daughters criticising my air, my features, or my dress.

You know, Mr. Rambler, that ambition is natural to youth, and curiosity to understanding, and therefore will hear, without wonder, that I was desirous to extend my victories over those who might give more honour to the conqueror; and that I found in a country life a continual repetition of the same pleasures, which was not sufficient to fill up the mind for the present, or raise any expectations of the future; and I will confess to you, that I was impatient for a sight of the town, and filled my thoughts with the discoveries which I should make, the triumphs that I should obtain, and the praises that I should receive.

At last the time came. My aunt, whose husband had a seat in parliament, and a place at court, buried her only child, and sent for me to supply the loss. The hope that I should so far insinuate myself into their favour, as to obtain a considerable augmentation of my fortune, procured me every convenience for my departure, with great expedition; and I could not, amidst all my transports, forbear some indignation to see with what readiness the natural guardians of my virtue sold me to a state, which they thought more hazardous than it really was, as soon as a new accession of fortune glittered in their eyes.

Three days I was upon the road, and on the fourth morning my heart danced at the sight of London. I was set down at my aunt's, and entered upon the scene of action. I expected now, from the age and experience of my aunt, some prudential lessons; but, after the first civilities and first tears were over, was told what pity it was to have kept so fine a girl so long in the country; for the people who did not begin young, seldom dealt their cards handsomely, or played them tolerably.

Young persons are commonly inclined to slight the remarks and counsels of their elders. I smiled, perhaps, with too much contempt, and was upon the point of telling her that my time had not been passed in such trivial attainments. But I soon found that things are to be estimated, not by the importance of their effects, but the frequency of their use.

A few days after, my aunt gave me notice, that some company, which she had been six weeks in collecting, was to meet that evening, and she expected a finer assembly than had been seen all the winter. She expressed this in the jargon of a gamester, and, when I asked an explication of her terms of art, wondered where I had lived. I had already found my aunt so incapable of any rational conclusion, and so ignorant of every thing, whether great or little, that I had lost all regard to her opinion, and dressed myself with great expectations of an opportunity to display my charms among rivals, whose competition would not dishonour me. The company came in, and after the cursory compliments of salutation, alike easy to the lowest and the highest understanding, what was the result? The cards were broke open, the parties were formed, the whole night passed in a game, upon which the young and old were equally employed; nor was I able to attract an eye, or gain an ear, but being compelled to play without skill, I perpetually embarrassed my partner, and soon perceived the contempt of the whole table gathering upon me.

I cannot but suspect, Sir, that this odious fashion is produced by a conspiracy of the old, the ugly, and the ignorant, against the young and beautiful, the witty and the gay, as a contrivance to level all distinctions of nature and of art, to confound the world in a chaos of folly, to take from those who could outshine them all the advantages of mind and body, to withhold youth from its natural pleasures, deprive wit of its influence, and beauty of its charms, to fix those hearts upon money, to which love has hitherto been entitled, to sink life into a tedious

uniformity, and to allow it no other hopes or fears, but those of robbing, and being robbed.

Be pleased, Sir, to inform those of my sex who have minds capable of nobler sentiments, that, if they will unite in vindication of their pleasures and their prerogatives, they may fix a time, at which cards shall cease to be in fashion, or be left only to those who have neither beauty to be loved, nor spirit to be feared; neither knowledge to teach, nor modesty to learn; and who, having passed their youth in vice, are justly condemned to spend their age in folly. I am, Sir, &c.

CLEORA.

SIR,

VEXATION will burst my heart, if I do not give it vent. As you publish a paper, I insist upon it that you insert this in your next, as ever you hope for the kindness and encouragement of any woman of taste, spirit, and virtue. I would have it published to the world, how deserving wives are used by imperious coxcombs, that henceforth no woman may marry who has not the patience of Grizzel. Nay, if even Grizzel had been married to a gamester, her temper would never have held out. A wretch, that loses his good-humour and humanity along with his money, and will not allow enough from his own extravagances to support a woman of fashion in the necessary amusements of life!—Why does not he employ his wise head to make a figure in parliament, raise an estate, and get a title? That would be fitter for the master of a family, than rattling a noisy dice-box; and then he might indulge his wife in a few slight expences and elegant diversions.

What if I was unfortunate at Brag?—should he not have stayed to see how luck would turn another time? Instead of that, what does he do, but picks a quarrel, upbraids me with loss of beauty, abuses my acquaintance, ridicules my play, and insults my understanding; says, forsooth, that women have not heads enough to play with

any thing but dolls, and that they should be employed in things proportionable to their understanding, keep at home, and mind family affairs.

I do stay at home, Sir, and all the world knows I am at home every Sunday. I have had six routs this winter, and sent out ten packs of cards in invitations to private parties. As for management, I am sure he cannot call me extravagant, or say I do not mind my family. The children are out at nurse in villages as cheap as any two little brats can be kept, nor have I ever seen them since; so he has no trouble about them. The servants live at board wages. My own dinners come from the Thatched House; and I have never paid a penny for any thing I have bought since I was married. As for play, I do think I may, indeed, indulge in that, now I am my own mistress. Papa made me drudge at whist till I was tired of it; and, far from wanting a head, Mr. Hoyle, when he had not given me above forty lessons, said I was one of his best scholars. I thought then with myself, that, if once I was at liberty, I would leave play, and take to reading romances, things so forbidden at our house, and so railed at, that it was impossible not to fancy them very charming. Most unfortunately, to save me from absolute undutifulness, just as I was married, came dear Brag into fashion, and ever since it has been the joy of my life; so easy, so cheerful and careless, so void of thought, and so genteel! Who can help loving it? Yet the perfidious thing has used me very ill of late, and to-morrow I should have changed it for Faro. But, oh! this detestable to-morrow, a thing always expected, and never found.—— Within these few hours must I be dragged into the country. The wretch, Sir, left me in a fit, which his threatenings had occasioned, and unmercifully ordered a post-chaise. Stay I cannot, for money I have none, and credit I cannot get.——But I will make the monkey play with me at picquet upon the road for all I want. I am almost sure to beat him, and his debts of honour I know he will pay. Then who can tell but I may still come back and

conquer lady Packer? Sir, you need not print this last scheme, and, upon second thoughts, you may.——Oh, distraction! the post-chaise is at the door. Sir, publish what you will, only let it be printed without a name.

N° 16. Saturday, *May* 12, 1750.

———*Multis dicendi copia torrens,*
Et sua mortifera est facundia——Juv.

Some who the depths of eloquence have found,
In that unnavigable stream were drown'd.—Dryden.

SIR,

I am the modest young man whom you favoured with your advice, in a late paper; and, as I am very far from suspecting that you foresaw the numberless inconveniencies which I have, by following it, brought upon myself, I will lay my condition open before you, for you seem bound to extricate me from the perplexities in which your counsel, however innocent in the intention, has contributed to involve me.

You told me, as you thought, to my comfort, that a writer might easily find means of introducing his genius to the world, for the *presses of England were open.* This I have now fatally experienced; the press is, indeed, open.

———*Facilis descensus Averni,*
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis.—Virg.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way.—Dryden.

The means of doing hurt to ourselves are always at hand. I immediately sent to a printer, and contracted with him for an impression of several thousands of my pamphlet. While it was at the press, I was seldom absent from the printing-house, and continually urged the workmen to haste, by solicitations, promises, and rewards. From the day all other pleasures were excluded, by the delightful employment of correcting the sheets; and from

the night, sleep generally was banished, by anticipations of the happiness which every hour was bringing nearer.

At last the time of publication approached, and my heart beat with the raptures of an author. I was above all little precautions, and, in defiance of envy or of criticism, set my name upon the title, without sufficiently considering, that what has once passed the press is irrevocable, and that though the printing-house may properly be compared to the infernal regions, for the facility of its entrance, and the difficulty with which authors return from it; yet there is this difference, that a great genius can never return to his former state, by a happy draught of the waters of oblivion.

I am now, Mr. Rambler, known to be an author, and am condemned, irreversibly condemned, to all the miseries of high reputation. The first morning after publication my friends assembled about me; I presented each, as is usual, with a copy of my book. They looked into the first pages, but were hindered, by their admiration, from reading further. The first pages are, indeed, very elaborate. Some passages they particularly dwelt upon, as more eminently beautiful than the rest; and some delicate strokes, and secret elegancies, I pointed out to them, which had escaped their observation. I then begged of them to forbear their compliments, and invited them, I could do no less, to dine with me at a tavern. After dinner, the book was resumed; but their praises very often so much overpowered my modesty, that I was forced to put about the glass, and had often no means of repressing the clamours of their admiration, but by thundering to the drawer for another bottle.

Next morning another set of my acquaintance congratulated me upon my performance, with such importunity of praise, that I was again forced to obviate their civilities by a treat. On the third day, I had yet a greater number of applauders to put to silence in the same manner; and, on the fourth, those whom I had entertained the first day came again, having, in the perusal of the remaining

part of the book, discovered so many forcible sentences and masterly touches, that it was impossible for me to bear the repetition of their commendations. I therefore persuaded them once more to adjourn to the tavern, and choose some other subject, on which I might share in their conversation. But it was not in their power to withhold their attention from my performance, which had so entirely taken possession of their minds, that no entreaties of mine could change their topick, and I was obliged to stifle, with claret, that praise which neither my modesty could hinder, nor my uneasiness repress.

The whole week was thus spent in a kind of literary revel, and I have now found that nothing is so expensive as great abilities, unless there is joined with them an insatiable eagerness of praise; for to escape from the pain of hearing myself exalted above the greatest names, dead and living, of the learned world, it has already cost me two hogsheads of port, fifteen gallons of arrack, ten dozen of claret, and five and forty bottles of champagne.

I was resolved to stay at home no longer, and therefore rose early and went to the coffee-house; but found that I had now made myself too eminent for happiness, and that I was no longer to enjoy the pleasure of mixing, upon equal terms, with the rest of the world. As soon as I enter the room, I see part of the company raging with envy, which they endeavour to conceal, sometimes with the appearance of laughter, and sometimes with that of contempt; but the disguise is such, that I can discover the secret rancour of their hearts, and as envy is deservedly its own punishment, I frequently indulge myself in tormenting them with my presence.

But though there may be some slight satisfaction received from the mortification of my enemies, yet my benevolence will not suffer me to take any pleasure in the terrours of my friends. I have been cautious, since the appearance of my work, not to give myself more premeditated airs of superiority, than the most rigid humility might allow. It is, indeed, not impossible that I may

sometimes have laid down my opinion, in a manner that shewed a consciousness of my ability to maintain it, or interrupted the conversation, when I saw its tendency, without suffering the speaker to waste his time in explaining his sentiments; and, indeed, I did indulge myself for two days in a custom of drumming with my fingers, when the company began to lose themselves in absurdities, or to encroach upon subjects which I knew them unqualified to discuss. But I generally acted with great appearance of respect, even to those whose stupidity I pitied in my heart. Yet, notwithstanding this exemplary moderation, so universal is the dread of uncommon powers, and such the unwillingness of mankind to be made wiser, that I have now for some days found myself shunned by all my acquaintance. If I knock at a door, nobody is at home; if I enter a coffee-house, I have the box to myself. I live in the town like a lion in his desert, or an eagle on his rock, too great for friendship or society, and condemned to solitude by unhappy elevation and dreaded ascendency.

Nor is my character only formidable to others, but burdensome to myself. I naturally love to talk without much thinking, to scatter my merriment at random, and to relax my thoughts with ludicrous remarks and fanciful images; but such is now the importance of my opinion, that I am afraid to offer it, lest, by being established too hastily into a maxim, it should be the occasion of errour to half the nation; and such is the expectation with which I am attended, when I am going to speak, that I frequently pause to reflect whether what I am about to utter is worthy of myself.

This, Sir, is sufficiently miserable; but there are still greater calamities behind. You must have read in Pope and Swift how men of parts have had their closets rifled, and their cabinets broke open, at the instigation of piratical booksellers, for the profit of their works; and it is apparent that there are many prints now sold in the shops, of men whom you cannot suspect of sitting for that pur-

pose, and whose likenesses must have been certainly stolen when their names made their faces vendible. These considerations at first put me on my guard, and I have, indeed, found sufficient reason for my caution, for I have discovered many people examining my countenance, with a curiosity that shewed their intention to draw it; I immediately left the house, but find the same behaviour in another.

Others may be persecuted, but I am haunted; I have good reason to believe that eleven painters are now dogging me, for they know that he who can get my face first will make his fortune. I often change my wig, and wear my hat over my eyes, by which I hope somewhat to confound them; for you know it is not fair to sell my face, without admitting me to share the profit.

I am, however, not so much in pain for my face as for my papers, which I dare neither carry with me nor leave behind. I have, indeed, taken some measures for their preservation, having put them in an iron chest, and fixed a padlock upon my closet. I change my lodgings five times a week, and always remove at the dead of night.

Thus I live, in consequence of having given too great proofs of a predominant genius, in the solitude of a hermit, with the anxiety of a miser, and the caution of an outlaw; afraid to shew my face lest it should be copied; afraid to speak, lest I should injure my character; and to write, lest my correspondents should publish my letters; always uneasy lest my servants should steal my papers for the sake of money, or my friends for that of the publick. This it is to soar above the rest of mankind; and this representation I lay before you, that I may be informed how to divest myself of the laurels which are so cumbersome to the wearer, and descend to the enjoyment of that quiet, from which I find a writer of the first class so fatally debarred.

MISELLUS.

N° 17. TUESDAY, *May* 15, 1750.

—— *Me non oracula certum,*
Sed mors certa facit.—LUCAN.

Let those weak minds, who live in doubt and fear,
To juggling priests for oracles repair;
One certain hour of death to each decreed,
My fixt, my certain soul, from doubt has freed.—ROWE.

IT is recorded of some eastern monarch, that he kept an officer in his house, whose employment it was to remind him of his mortality, by calling out every morning, at a stated hour, *Remember, prince, that thou shalt die!* And the contemplation of the frailness and uncertainty of our present state appeared of so much importance to Solon of Athens, that he left this precept to future ages; *Keep thine eye fixed upon the end of life.*

A frequent and attentive prospect of that moment, which must put a period to all our schemes, and deprive us of all our acquisitions, is indeed of the utmost efficacy to the just and rational regulation of our lives; nor would ever any thing wicked, or often any thing absurd, be undertaken or prosecuted by him who should begin every day with a serious reflection that he is born to die.

The disturbers of our happiness, in this world, are our desires, our griefs, and our fears; and to all these, the consideration of mortality is a certain and adequate remedy. Think, says Epictetus, frequently on poverty, banishment, and death, and thou wilt then never indulge violent desires, or give up thy heart to mean sentiments, *οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμήσῃ, οὔτε ἄγαν ἐπιθυμήσεις τινός.*

That the maxim of Epictetus is founded on just observation will easily be granted, when we reflect, how that vehemence of eagerness after the common objects of pursuit is kindled in our minds. We represent to ourselves the pleasures of some future possession, and suffer our thoughts to dwell attentively upon it, till it has wholly engrossed the imagination, and permits us not to conceive

any happiness but its attainment, or any misery but its loss; every other satisfaction which the bounty of Providence has scattered over life is neglected as inconsiderable, in comparison of the great object which we have placed before us, and is thrown from us as incumbering our activity, or trampled under foot as standing in our way.

Every man has experienced how much of this ardour has been remitted, when a sharp or tedious sickness has set death before his eyes. The extensive influence of greatness, the glitter of wealth, the praises of admirers, and the attendance of supplicants, have appeared vain and empty things, when the last hour seemed to be approaching: and the same appearance they would always have, if the same thought was always predominant. We should then find the absurdity of stretching out our arms incessantly to grasp that which we cannot keep, and wearing out our lives in endeavours to add new turrets to the fabrick of ambition, when the foundation itself is shaking, and the ground on which it stands is mouldering away.

All envy is proportionate to desire; we are uneasy at the attainments of another, according as we think our own happiness would be advanced by the addition of that which he withholds from us; and therefore whatever depresses immoderate wishes, will, at the same time, set the heart free from the corrosion of envy, and exempt us from that vice which is, above most others, tormenting to ourselves, hateful to the world, and productive of mean artifices, and sordid projects. He that considers how soon he must close his life, will find nothing of so much importance as to close it well; and will, therefore, look with indifference upon whatever is useless to that purpose. Whoever reflects frequently upon the uncertainty of his own duration, will find out, that the state of others is not more permanent, and that what can confer nothing on himself very desirable, cannot so much improve the condition of a rival, as to make him much superior to those from whom he has carried the prize; a prize too mean to deserve a very obstinate opposition.

Even grief, that passion to which the virtuous and tender mind is particularly subject, will be obviated or alleviated by the same thoughts. It will be obviated, if all the blessings of our condition are enjoyed with a constant sense of this uncertain tenure. If we remember, that whatever we possess is to be in our hands but a very little time, and that the little which our most lively hopes can promise us may be made less by ten thousand accidents; we shall not much repine at a loss, of which we cannot estimate the value, but of which, though we are not able to tell the least amount, we know, with sufficient certainty, the greatest, and are convinced that the greatest is not much to be regretted.

But, if any passion has so much usurped our understanding, as not to suffer us to enjoy advantages with the moderation prescribed by reason, it is not too late to apply this remedy, when we find ourselves sinking under sorrow, and inclined to pine for that which is irrecoverably vanished. We may then suefully revolve the uncertainty of our own condition, and the folly of lamenting that from which, if it had stayed a little longer, we should ourselves have been taken away.

With regard to the sharpest and most melting sorrow, that which arises from the loss of those whom we have loved with tenderness, it may be observed, that friendship between mortals can be contracted on no other terms, than that one must some time mourn for the other's death: And this grief will always yield to the survivor one consolation proportionate to his affliction; for the pain, whatever it be, that he himself feels, his friend has escaped.

Nor is fear, the most overbearing and resistless of all our passions, less to be temperated by this universal medicine of the mind. The frequent contemplation of death, as it shews the vanity of all human good, discovers likewise the lightness of all terrestrial evil, which certainly can last no longer than the subject upon which it acts; and according to the old observation, must be shorter, as it is more violent. The most cruel calamity which mis-

fortune can produce, must, by the necessity of nature, be quickly at an end. The soul cannot long be held in prison, but will fly away, and leave a lifeless body to human malice,

——*Ridetque sui ludibria trunci.*

And soaring mocks the broken frame below.

The utmost that we can threaten to one another is that death, which, indeed, we may precipitate, but cannot retard, and from which, therefore, it cannot become a wise man to buy a reprieve at the expence of virtue, since he knows not how small a portion of time he can purchase, but knows, that whether short or long, it will be made less valuable by the remembrance of the price at which it has been obtained. He is sure that he destroys his happiness, but is not sure that he lengthens his life.

The known shortness of life, as it ought to moderate our passions, may likewise, with equal propriety, contract our designs. There is not time for the most forcible genius, and most active industry, to extend its effects beyond a certain sphere. To project the conquest of the world, is the madness of mighty princes; to hope for excellence in every science, has been the folly of literary heroes; and both have found at last, that they have panted for a height of eminence denied to humanity, and have lost many opportunities of making themselves useful and happy, by a vain ambition of obtaining a species of honour, which the eternal laws of Providence have placed beyond the reach of man.

The miscarriages of the great designs of princes are recorded in the histories of the world, but are of little use to the bulk of mankind, who seem very little interested in admonitions against errours which they cannot commit. But the fate of learned ambition is a proper subject for every scholar to consider; for who has not had occasion to regret the dissipation of great abilities in a boundless multiplicity of pursuits, to lament the sudden desertion of excellent designs, upon the offer of some other subject made inviting by its novelty, and to observe the inac-

curacy and deficiencies of works left unfinished by too great an extension of the plan?

It is always pleasing to observe, how much more our minds can conceive, than our bodies can perform; yet it is our duty, while we continue in this complicated state, to regulate one part of our composition by some regard to the other. We are not to indulge our corporeal appetites with pleasures that impair our intellectual vigour, nor gratify our minds with schemes which we know our lives must fail in attempting to execute. The uncertainty of our duration ought at once to set bounds to our designs, and add incitements to our industry; and when we find ourselves inclined either to immensity in our schemes, or sluggishness in our endeavours, we may either check, or animate, ourselves, by recollecting, with the father of physick, *that art is long, and life is short.*

N° 18. SATURDAY, *May*, 19, 1750.

Illic matre carentibus,
Privignis mulier temperat innocens,
Nec dotata regit virum
Conjux, nec nitido fidit adultero:
Dos est magna parentum
Virtus, et metuens alterius tori
Certo fœdere castitas.—HORACE.

Not there the guiltless step-dame knows
The baleful draught for orphans to compose;
No wife high portion'd rules her spouse,
Or trusts her essenced lover's faithless vows:
The lovers there for dowry claim
The father's virtue, and the spotless fame,
Which dares not break the nuptial tie.—FRANCIS.

THERE is no observation more frequently made by such as employ themselves in surveying the conduct of mankind, than that marriage, though the dictate of nature, and the institution of Providence, is yet very often the cause of misery, and that those who enter into that state can seldom forbear to express their repentance, and their

envy of those whom either chance or caution hath withheld from it.

This general unhappiness has given occasion to many sage maxims among the serious, and smart remarks among the gay; the moralist and the writer of epigrams have equally shewn their abilities upon it; some have lamented, and some have ridiculed it; but as the faculty of writing has been chiefly a masculine endowment, the reproach of making the world miserable has been always thrown upon the women, and the grave and the merry have equally thought themselves at liberty to conclude either with declamatory complaints, or satirical censures, of female folly or fickleness, ambition or cruelty, extravagance or lust.

Led by such a number of examples, and incited by my share in the common interest, I sometimes venture to consider this universal grievance, having endeavoured to divest my heart of all partiality, and place myself as a kind of neutral being between the sexes, whose clamours, being equally vented on both sides with all the vehemence of distress, all the apparent confidence of justice, and all the indignation of injured virtue, seem entitled to equal regard. The men have, indeed, by their superiority of writing, been able to collect the evidence of many ages, and raise prejudices in their favour by the venerable testimonies of philosophers, historians, and poets, but the pleas of the ladies appeal to passions of more forcible operation than the reverence of antiquity. If they have not so great names on their side, they have stronger arguments: it is to little purpose, that Socrates, or Euripides, are produced against the sighs of softness, and the tears of beauty. The most frigid and inexorable judge would at least stand suspended between equal powers, as Lucan was perplexed in the determination of the cause, where the deities were on one side, and Cato on the other.

But I, who have long studied the severest and most abstracted philosophy, have now, in the cool maturity of life, arrived at such command over my passions, that I

can hear the vociferations of either sex without catching any of the fire from those that utter them. For I have found, by long experience, that a man will sometimes rage at his wife, when in reality his mistress has offended him; and a lady complain of the cruelty of her husband, when she has no other enemy than bad cards. I do not suffer myself to be any longer imposed upon by oaths on one side, or fits on the other; nor when the husband hastens to the tavern, and the lady retires to her closet, am I always confident that they are driven by their miseries; since I have sometimes reason to believe, that they purpose not so much to soothe their sorrows, as to animate their fury. But how little credit soever may be given to particular accusations, the general accumulation of the charge shews, with too much evidence, that married persons are not very often advanced in felicity; and, therefore, it may be proper to examine at what avenues so many evils have made their way into the world. With this purpose, I have reviewed the lives of my friends, who have been least successful in connubial contracts, and attentively considered by what motives they were incited to marry, and by what principles they regulated their choice.

One of the first of my acquaintances that resolved to quit the unsettled thoughtless condition of a bachelor, was Prudentius, a man of slow parts, but not without knowledge or judgment in things which he had leisure to consider gradually before he determined them. Whenever we met at a tavern, it was his province to settle the scheme of our entertainment, contract with the cook, and inform us when we had called for wine to the sum originally proposed. This grave considerer found, by deep meditation, that a man was no loser by marrying early, even though he contented himself with a less fortune; for estimating the exact worth of annuities, he found that considering the constant diminution of the value of life, with the probable fall of the interest of money, it was not worse to have ten thousand pounds at the age of two and

twenty years, than a much larger fortune at thirty; for many opportunities, says he, occur of improving money, which if a man misses, he may not afterwards recover.

Full of these reflections, he threw his eyes about him, not in search of beauty or elegance, dignity or understanding, but of a woman with ten thousand pounds. Such a woman, in a wealthy part of the kingdom, it was not very difficult to find; and by artful management with her father, whose ambition was to make his daughter a gentlewoman, my friend got her, as he boasted to us in confidence two days after his marriage, for a settlement of seventy-three pounds a-year less than her fortune might have claimed, and less than he would himself have given, if the fool had been but wise enough to delay the bargain.

Thus, at once delighted with the superiority of his parts and the augmentation of his fortune, he carried Furia to his own house, in which he never afterwards enjoyed one hour of happiness. For Furia was a wretch of mean intellects, violent passions, a strong voice, and low education, without any sense of happiness but that which consisted in eating, and counting money. Furia was a scold. They agreed in the desire of wealth, but with this difference, that Prudentius was for growing rich by gain, Furia by parsimony. Prudentius would venture his money with chances very much in his favour; but Furia very wisely observing, that what they had was, while they had it, *their own*, thought all traffick too great a hazard, and was for putting it out at low interest, upon good security. Prudentius ventured, however, to insure a ship at a very unreasonable price; but happening to lose his money, was so tormented with the clamours of his wife, that he never durst try a second experiment. He has now grovelled seven and forty years under Furia's direction, who never once mentioned him, since his bad luck, by any other name than that of *the insurer*.

The next that married from our society was Florentius. He happened to see Zephyretta in a chariot at a horse-race, danced with her at night, was confirmed in his first

ardour, waited on her next morning, and declared himself her lover. Florentius had not knowledge enough of the world, to distinguish between the flutter of coquetry, and the sprightliness of wit, or between the smile of allurement, and that of cheerfulness. He was soon awaked from his rapture, by conviction that his pleasure was but the pleasure of a day. Zephyretta had in four and twenty hours spent her stock of repartee, gone round the circle of her airs, and had nothing remaining for him but childish insipidity, or for herself, but the practice of the same artifices upon new men.

Melissus was a man of parts, capable of enjoying and of improving life. He had passed through the various scenes of gaiety with that indifference and possession of himself, natural to men who have something higher and nobler in their prospect. Retiring to spend the summer in a village little frequented, he happened to lodge in the same house with Ianthe, and was unavoidably drawn to some acquaintance, which her wit and politeness soon invited him to improve. Having no opportunity of any other company, they were always together; and as they owed their pleasures to each other, they began to forget that any pleasure was enjoyed before their meeting. Melissus, from being delighted with her company, quickly began to be uneasy in her absence, and being sufficiently convinced of the force of her understanding, and finding, as he imagined, such a conformity of temper as declared them formed for each other, addressed her as a lover, after no very long courtship obtained her for his wife, and brought her next winter to town in triumph.

Now began their infelicity. Melissus had only seen her in one scene, where there was no variety of objects, to produce the proper excitements to contrary desires. They had both loved solitude and reflection, where there was nothing but solitude and reflection to be loved; but when they came into public life, Ianthe discovered those passions which accident rather than hypocrisy had hitherto concealed. She was, indeed, not without the

power of thinking, but was wholly without the exertion of that power when either gaiety or splendour played on her imagination. She was expensive in her diversions, vehement in her passions, insatiate of pleasure, however dangerous to her reputation, and eager of applause, by whomsoever it might be given. This was the wife which Melissus the philosopher found in his retirement, and from whom he expected an associate in his studies, and an assistant to his virtues.

Prosapius, upon the death of his younger brother, that the family might not be extinct, married his housekeeper, and has ever since been complaining to his friends that mean notions are instilled into his children, that he is ashamed to sit at his own table, and that his house is uneasy to him for want of suitable companions.

Avaro, master of a very large estate, took a woman of bad reputation, recommended to him by a rich uncle, who made that marriage the condition on which he should be his heir. Avaro now wonders to perceive his own fortune, his wife's, and his uncle's, insufficient to give him that happiness which is to be found only with a woman of virtue.

I intend to treat in more papers on this important article of life, and shall, therefore, make no reflection upon these histories, except that all whom I have mentioned failed to obtain happiness, for want of considering that marriage is the strictest tie of perpetual friendship; that there can be no friendship without confidence, and no confidence without integrity; and that he must expect to be wretched, who pays to beauty, riches, or politeness, that regard which only virtue and piety can claim.

N° 19. TUESDAY, *May* 22, 1750.

Dum te causidicum, dum te modo rhetora fingis,
Et non decernis, Taure, quid esse velis,
Peleos et Priami transit, vel Nestoris ætas,
Et serum fuerat jam tibi desinere.——
Eja, age, rumpe moras, quo te spectabimus usque?
Dum quid sis dubitas, jam potes esse nihil.—MART.

To rhetorick now, and now to law inclin'd,
Uncertain where to fix thy changing mind;
Old Priam's age or Nestor's may be out,
And thou, O Taures! still go on in doubt.
Come, then, how long such wavering shall we see?
Thou may'st doubt on: thou now canst nothing be.—F. LEWIS.

IT is never without very melancholy reflections, that we can observe the misconduct, or miscarriage, of those men, who seem, by the force of understanding, or extent of knowledge, exempted from the general frailties of human nature, and privileged from the common infelicities of life. Though the world is crowded with scenes of calamity, we look upon the general mass of wretchedness with very little regard, and fix our eyes upon the state of particular persons, whom the eminence of their qualities marks out from the multitude; as in reading an account of a battle, we seldom reflect on the vulgar heaps of slaughter, but follow the hero with our whole attention, through all the varieties of his fortune, without a thought of the thousands that are falling round him.

With the same kind of anxious veneration I have for many years been making observations on the life of Polyphilus, a man whom all his acquaintances have, from his first appearance in the world, feared for the quickness of his discernment, and admired for the multiplicity of his attainments, but whose progress in life, and usefulness to mankind, has been hindered by the superfluity of his knowledge, and the celerity of his mind.

Polyphilus was remarkable, at the school, for surpassing all his companions, without any visible application, and at the university was distinguished equally for his successful progress as well through the thorny mazes of

science, as the flowery path of politer literature, without any strict confinement to hours of study, or remarkable forbearance of the common amusements of young men.

When Polyphilus was at the age in which men usually choose their profession, and prepare to enter into a public character, every academical eye was fixed upon him; all were curious to inquire what this universal genius would fix upon for the employment of his life; and no doubt was made but that he would leave all his contemporaries behind him, and mount to the highest honours of that class in which he should inlist himself, without those delays and pauses which must be endured by meaner abilities.

Polyphilus, though by no means insolent or assuming, had been sufficiently encouraged, by uninterrupted success, to place great confidence in his own parts; and was not below his companions in the indulgence of his hopes, and expectations of the astonishment with which the world would be struck, when first his lustre should break out upon it; nor could he forbear (for whom does not constant flattery intoxicate?) to join sometimes in the mirth of his friends, at the sudden disappearance of those, who, having shone a while, and drawn the eyes of the publick upon their feeble radiance, were now doomed to fade away before him.

It is natural for a man to catch advantageous notions of the condition which those with whom he converses are striving to attain. Polyphilus, in a ramble to London, fell accidentally among the physicians, and was so much pleased with the prospect of turning philosophy to profit, and so highly delighted with a new theory of fevers which darted into his imagination, and which, after having considered it a few hours, he found himself able to maintain against all the advocates for the ancient system, that he resolved to apply himself to anatomy, botany, and chemistry, and to leave no part unconquered, either of the animal, mineral, or vegetable kingdoms.

He therefore read authors, constructed systems, and tried

experiments; but, unhappily, as he was going to see a new plant in flower at Chelsea, he met, in crossing Westminster to take water, the chancellor's coach; he had the curiosity to follow him into the hall, where a remarkable cause happened to be tried, and found himself able to produce so many arguments, which the lawyers had omitted on both sides, that he determined to quit physic for a profession in which he found it would be so easy to excel, and which promised higher honours, and larger profits, without melancholy attendance upon misery, mean submission to peevishness, and continual interruption of rest and pleasure.

He immediately took chambers in the Temple, bought a common-place book, and confined himself for some months to the perusal of the statutes, year-books, pleadings, and reports; he was a constant hearer of the courts, and began to put cases with reasonable accuracy. But he soon discovered, by considering the fortune of lawyers, that preferment was not to be got by acuteness, learning, and eloquence. He was perplexed by the absurdities of attornies, and misrepresentations made by his clients of their own causes, by the useless anxiety of one, and the incessant importunity of another; he began to repent of having devoted himself to a study, which was so narrow in its comprehension that it could never carry his name to any other country, and thought it unworthy of a man of parts to sell his life only for money. The barrenness of his fellow-students forced him generally into other company at his hours of entertainment, and among the varieties of conversation through which his curiosity was daily wandering, he by chance, mingled at a tavern with some intelligent officers of the army. A man of letters was easily dazzled with the gaiety of their appearance, and softened into kindness by the politeness of their address; he, therefore, cultivated this new acquaintance, and when he saw how readily they found in every place admission and regard, and how familiarly they mingled with every rank and order of men, he began to feel his heart beat for military honours, and wondered how the prejudices of the university should make

him so long insensible of that ambition, which has fired so many hearts in every age, and negligent of that calling, which is, above all others, universally and invariably illustrious, and which gives, even to the exterior appearance of its professors, a dignity and freedom unknown to the rest of mankind.

These favourable impressions were made still deeper by his conversation with ladies, whose regard for soldiers he could not observe, without wishing himself one of that happy fraternity, to which the female world seem to have devoted their charms and their kindness. The love of knowledge, which was still his predominant inclination, was gratified by the recital of adventures, and accounts of foreign countries; and therefore he concluded that there was no way of life in which all his views could so completely concentre as in that of a soldier. In the art of war he thought it not difficult to excel, having observed his new friends not very much versed in the principles of tacticks or fortification: he therefore studied all the military writers both ancient and modern, and, in a short time, could tell how to have gained every remarkable battle that has been lost from the beginning of the world. He often showed at table how Alexander should have been checked in his conquests, what was the fatal errour at Pharsalia, how Charles of Sweden might have escaped his ruin at Pultowa, and Marlborough might have been made to repent his temerity at Blenheim. He entrenched armies upon paper so that no superiority of numbers could force them, and modelled in clay many impregnable fortresses, on which all the present arts of attack would be exhausted without effect.

Polyphilus, in a short time, obtained a commission; but before he could rub off the solemnity of a scholar, and gain the true air of military vivacity, a war was declared, and forces sent to the continent. Here Polyphilus unhappily found that study alone would not make a soldier; for being much accustomed to think, he let the sense of danger sink into his mind, and felt at the approach of any action, that

terrour which a sentence of death would have brought upon him. He saw that, instead of conquering their fears, the endeavour of his gay friends was only to escape them; but his philosophy chained his mind to its object, and rather loaded him with shackles than furnished him with arms. He, however, suppressed his misery in silence, and passed through the campaign with honour, but found himself utterly unable to support another.

He then had recourse again to his books, and continued to range from one study to another. As I usually visit him once a month, and am admitted to him without previous notice, I have found him within this last half year, decyphering the Chinese language, making a farce, collecting a vocabulary of the obsolete terms of the English law, writing an inquiry concerning the ancient Corinthian brass, and forming a new scheme of the variations of the needle.

Thus is this powerful genius, which might have extended the sphere of any science, or benefited the world in any profession, dissipated in a boundless variety, without profit to others or himself! He makes sudden irruptions into the regions of knowledge, and sees all obstacles give way before him; but he never stays long enough to complete his conquest, to establish laws, or bring away the spoils.

Such is often the folly of men, whom nature has enabled to obtain skill and knowledge, on terms so easy, that they have no sense of the value of the acquisition; they are qualified to make such speedy progress in learning, that they think themselves at liberty to loiter in the way, and by turning aside after every new object, lose the race, like Atalanta, to slower competitors, who press diligently forward, and whose force is directed to a single point.

I have often thought those happy that have been fixed, from the first dawn of thought, in a determination to some state of life, by the choice of one whose authority may preclude caprice, and whose influence may prejudice them in favour of his opinion. The general precept of con-

sulting the genius is of little use, unless we are told how the genius can be known. If it is to be discovered only by experiment, life will be lost before the resolution can be fixed; if any other indications are to be found, they may, perhaps, be very early discerned. At least, if to miscarry in an attempt be a proof of having mistaken the direction of the genius, men appear not less frequently deceived with regard to themselves than to others; and therefore no one has much reason to complain that his life was planned out by his friends, or to be confident that he should have had either more honour or happiness, by being abandoned to the chance of his own fancy.

It was said of the learned bishop Sanderson, that when he was preparing his lectures, he hesitated so much, and rejected so often, that, at the time of reading, he was often forced to produce, not what was best, but what happened to be at hand. This will be the state of every man, who, in the choice of his employment, balances all the arguments on every side; the complication is so intricate, the motives and objections so numerous, there is so much play for the imagination, and so much remains in the power of others, that reason is forced at last to rest in neutrality, the decision devolves into the hands of chance, and after a great part of life spent in inquiries which can never be resolved, the rest must often pass in repenting the unnecessary delay, and can be useful to few other purposes than to warn others against the same folly, and to shew, that of two states of life equally consistent with religion and virtue, he who chooses earliest chooses best.

N° 20. SATURDAY, *May* 26, 1750.

Ad populum phaleras, ego te intus, et in cute novi.—PERSIUS.

Such pageantry be to the people shown;
There boast thy horse's trappings and thy own;
I know thee to thy bottom, from within
Thy shallow centre, to thy utmost skin.—DRYDEN.

AMONG the numerous stratagems, by which pride endeavours to recommend folly to regard, there is scarcely

one that meets with less success than affectation, or a perpetual disguise of the real character by fictitious appearances; whether it be, that every man hates falsehood, from the natural congruity of truth to his faculties of reason, or that every man is jealous of the honour of his understanding, and thinks his discernment consequently called in question, whenever any thing is exhibited under a borrowed form.

This aversion from all kinds of disguise, whatever be its cause, is universally diffused, and incessantly in action; nor is it necessary, that to exasperate detestation, or excite contempt, any interest should be invaded, or any competition attempted; it is sufficient, that there is an intention to deceive, an intention which every heart swells to oppose, and every tongue is busy to detect.

This reflection was awakened in my mind by a very common practice among my correspondents, of writing under characters which they cannot support, which are of no use to the explanation or enforcement of that which they describe or recommend; and which, therefore, since they assume them only for the sake of displaying their abilities, I will advise them for the future to forbear, as laborious without advantage.

It is almost a general ambition of those who favour me with their advice for the regulation of my conduct, or their contribution for the assistance of my understanding, to affect the style and the names of ladies. And I cannot always withhold some expression of anger, like Sir Hugh in the comedy, when I happen to find that a woman has a beard. I must therefore warn the gentle Phyllis, that she send me no more letters from the Horse Guards; and require of Belinda, that she be content to resign her pretensions to female elegance, till she has lived three weeks without hearing the politicks of Batson's coffee-house. I must indulge myself in the liberty of observation, that there were some allusions in Chloris's production, sufficient to shew that Bracton and Plowden are her favourite authors; and that Euphelia has not been long enough at

home, to wear out all the traces of phraseology, which she learned in the expedition to Carthagena.

Among all my female friends, there was none who gave me more trouble to decypher her true character, than Penthesilea, whose letter lay upon my desk three days before I could fix upon the real writer. There was a confusion of images, and medley of barbarity, which held me long in suspence; till by perseverance I disentangled the perplexity, and found that Penthesilea is the son of a wealthy stock-jobber, who spends his morning under his father's eye in Change-Alley, dines at a tavern in Covent-Garden, passes his evening in the play-house, and part of the night at a gaming-table, and having learned the dialects of these various regions, has mingled them all in a studied composition.

When Lee was once told by a critick, that it was very easy to write like a madman; he answered, that it was difficult to write like a madman, but easy enough to write like a fool; and I hope to be excused by my kind contributors, if, in imitation of this great author, I presume to remind them, that it is much easier not to write like a man, than to write like a woman.

I have, indeed, some ingenious well-wishers, who, without departing from their sex, have found very wonderful appellations. A very smart letter has been sent me from a puny ensign, signed Ajax Telamonius; another, in recommendation of a new treatise upon cards, from a gamester, who calls himself Sesostris: and another upon the improvements of the fishery, from Dioclesian: but as these seem only to have picked up their appellations by chance, without endeavouring at any particular imposture, their improprieties are rather instances of blunder than of affectation, and are, therefore, not equally fitted to inflame the hostile passions; for it is not folly but pride, not errour but deceit, which the world means to persecute, when it raises the full cry of nature to hunt down affectation.

The hatred which dissimulation always draws upon

itself, is so great, that if I did not know how much cunning differs from wisdom, I should wonder that any men have so little knowledge of their own interest, as to aspire to wear a mask for life; to try to impose upon the world a character, to which they feel themselves void of any just claim; and to hazard their quiet, their fame, and even their profit, by exposing themselves to the danger of that reproach, malevolence, and neglect, which such a discovery as they have always to fear will certainly bring upon them.

It might be imagined, that the pleasure of reputation should consist in the satisfaction of having our opinion of our own merit confirmed by the suffrage of the publick; and that, to be extolled for a quality, which a man knows himself to want, should give him no other happiness than to be mistaken for the owner of an estate, over which he chances to be travelling. But he who subsists upon affectation, knows nothing of this delicacy; like a desperate adventurer in commerce, he takes up reputation upon trust, mortgages possessions which he never had, and enjoys, to the fatal hour of bankruptcy, though with a thousand terrours and anxieties, the unnecessary splendour of borrowed riches.

Affectation is to be always distinguished from hypocrisy, as being the art of counterfeiting those qualities which we might, with innocence and safety, be known to want. Thus the man who, to carry on any fraud, or to conceal any crime, pretends to rigours of devotion, and exactness of life, is guilty of hypocrisy; and his guilt is greater, as the end, for which he puts on the false appearance, is more pernicious. But he that, with an awkward address, and unpleasing countenance, boasts of the conquests made by him among the ladies, and counts over the thousands which he might have possessed if he would have submitted to the yoke of matrimony, is chargeable only with affectation. Hypocrisy is the necessary burthen of villany, affectation part of the chosen trappings of folly; the one completes a villain, the other only finishes a fop.

Contempt is the proper punishment of affectation, and detestation the just consequence of hypocrisy.

With the hypocrite it is not at present my intention to expostulate, though even he might be taught the excellency of virtue, by the necessity of seeming to be virtuous; but the man of affectation may, perhaps, be reclaimed, by finding how little he is likely to gain by perpetual constraint, and incessant vigilance, and how much more securely he might make his way to esteem, by cultivating real, than displaying counterfeit qualities.

Every thing future is to be estimated, by a wise man, in proportion to the probability of attaining it, and its value, when attained; and neither of these considerations will much contribute to the encouragement of affectation. For, if the pinnacles of fame be at best, slippery, how unsteady must his footing be who stands upon pinnacles without foundation! If praise be made by the inconstancy and maliciousness of those who must confer it, a blessing which no man can promise himself from the most conspicuous merit and vigorous industry, how faint must be the hope of gaining it, when the uncertainty is multiplied by the weakness of the pretensions! He that pursues fame with just claims, trusts his happiness to the winds; but he that endeavours after it by false merit, has to fear, not only the violence of the storm, but the leaks of his vessel. Though he should happen to keep above water for a time, by the help of a soft breeze, and a calm sea, at the first gust he must inevitably founder, with this melancholy reflection, that, if he would have been content with his natural station, he might have escaped his calamity. Affectation may possibly succeed for a time, and a man may, by great attention, persuade others, that he really has the qualities which he presumes to boast; but the hour will come when he should exert them, and then whatever he enjoyed in praise, he must suffer in reproach.

Applause and admiration are by no means to be counted among the necessaries of life, and therefore any indirect arts to obtain them have very little claim to pardon or

compassion. There is scarcely any man without some valuable or improveable qualities, by which he might always secure himself from contempt. And perhaps exemption from ignominy is the most eligible reputation, as freedom from pain is, among some philosophers, the definition of happiness.

If we therefore compare the value of the praise obtained by fictitious excellence, even while the cheat is yet undiscovered, with that kindness which every man may suit by his virtue, and that esteem to which most men may rise by common understanding steadily and honestly applied, we shall find that when from the adscititious happiness all the deductions are made by fear and casualty, there will remain nothing equiponderant to the security of truth. The state of the possessor of humble virtues, to the affecter of great excellencies, is that of a small cottage of stone, to the palace raised with ice by the empress of Russia; it was for a time splendid and luminous, but the first sunshine melted it to nothing.

N° 21. TUESDAY, *May* 29, 1750.

Terra salutiferas herbas, eademque nocentes,
Nutrit; et urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est.—OVID.

Our bane and physick the same earth bestows,
And near the noisome nettle blooms the rose.

EVERY man is prompted by the love of himself to imagine, that he possesses some qualities, superiour, either in kind or in degree, to those which he sees allotted to the rest of the world; and, whatever apparent disadvantages he may suffer in the comparison with others, he has some invisible distinctions, some latent reserve of excellence, which he throws into the balance, and by which he generally fancies that it is turned in his favour.

The studious and speculative part of mankind always seem to consider their fraternity as placed in a state of

opposition to those who are engaged in the tumult of publick business; and have pleased themselves, from age to age, with celebrating the felicity of their own condition, and with recounting the perplexity of politicks, the dangers of greatness, the anxieties of ambition, and the miseries of riches.

Among the numerous topicks of declamation that their industry has discovered on this subject, there is none which they press with greater efforts, or on which they have more copiously laid out their reason and their imagination, than the instability of high stations, and the uncertainty with which the profits and honours are possessed, that must be acquired with so much hazard, vigilance, and labour.

This they appear to consider as an irrefragable argument against the choice of the statesman and the warriour; and swell with confidence of victory, thus furnished by the muses with the arms which never can be blunted, and which no art or strength of their adversaries can elude or resist.

It was well known by experience to the nations which employed elephants in war, that though by the terrour of their bulk, and the violence of their impression, they often threw the enemy into disorder, yet there was always danger in the use of them, very nearly equivalent to the advantage; for if their first charge could be supported, they were easily driven back upon their confederates; they then broke through the troops behind them, and made no less havock in the precipitation of their retreat, than in the fury of their onset.

I know not whether those who have so vehemently urged the inconveniencies and danger of an active life, have not made use of arguments that may be retorted with equal force upon themselves; and whether the happiness of a candidate for literary fame be not subject to the same uncertainty with that of him who governs provinces, commands armies, presides in the senate, or dictates in the cabinet.

That eminence of learning is not to be gained without labour, at least equal to that which any other kind of greatness can require, will be allowed by those who wish to elevate the character of a scholar; since they cannot but know, that every human acquisition is valuable in proportion to the difficulty employed in its attainment. And that those who have gained the esteem and veneration of the world, by their knowledge or their genius, are by no means exempt from the solicitude which any other kind of dignity produces, may be conjectured from the innumerable artifices which they make use of to degrade a superiour, to repress a rival, or obstruct a follower; artifices so gross and mean, as to prove evidently how much a man may excel in learning, without being either more wise or more virtuous than those whose ignorance he pities or despises.

Nothing therefore remains, by which the student can gratify his desire of appearing to have built his happiness on a more firm basis than his antagonist, except the certainty with which his honours are enjoyed. The garlands gained by the heroes of literature must be gathered from summits equally difficult to climb with those that bear the civick or triumphal wreaths, they must be worn with equal envy, and guarded with equal care from those hands that are always employed in efforts to tear them away; the only remaining hope is, that their verdure is more lasting, and that they are less likely to fade by time, or less obnoxious to the blasts of accident.

Even this hope will receive very little encouragement from the examination of the history of learning, or observation of the fate of scholars in the present age. If we look back into past times, we find innumerable names of authors once in high reputation, read perhaps by the beautiful, quoted by the witty, and commented on by the grave; but of whom we now know only that they once existed. If we consider the distribution of literary fame in our own time, we shall find it a possession of very uncertain tenure; sometimes bestowed by a sudden caprice

of the publick, and again transferred to a new favourite, for no other reason than that he is new; sometimes refused to long labour and eminent desert, and sometimes granted to very slight pretensions; lost sometimes by security and negligence, and sometimes by too diligent endeavours to retain it.

A successful author is equally in danger of the diminution of his fame, whether he continues or ceases to write. The regard of the publick is not to be kept but by tribute, and the remembrance of past service will quickly languish, unless successive performances frequently revive it. Yet in every new attempt there is new hazard, and there are few who do not at some unlucky time injure their own characters by attempting to enlarge them.

There are many possible causes of that inequality which we may so frequently observe in the performances of the same man, from the influence of which no ability or industry is sufficiently secured, and which have so often sullied the splendour of genius, that the wit, as well as the conqueror, may be properly cautioned not to indulge his pride with too early triumphs, but to defer to the end of life his estimate of happiness.

—— *Ultima semper*
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded blest before he die.—ADDISON.

Among the motives that urge an author to undertakings by which his reputation is impaired, one of the most frequent must be mentioned with tenderness, because it is not to be counted among his follies, but his miseries. It very often happens that the works of learning or of wit are performed at the direction of those by whom they are to be rewarded; the writer has not always the choice of his subject, but is compelled to accept any task which is thrown before him, without much consideration of his own convenience, and without time to prepare himself by previous studies.

Miscarriages of this kind are likewise frequently the consequence of that acquaintance with the great, which is generally considered as one of the chief privileges of literature and genius. A man who has once learned to think himself exalted by familiarity with those whom nothing but their birth, or their fortunes, or such stations as are seldom gained by moral excellence, set above him, will not be long without submitting his understanding to their conduct; he will suffer them to prescribe the course of his studies, and employ him for their own purposes either of diversion or interest. His desire of pleasing those whose favour he has weakly made necessary to himself, will not suffer him always to consider how little he is qualified for the work imposed. Either his vanity will tempt him to conceal his deficiencies, or that cowardice, which always encroaches fast upon such as spend their lives in the company of persons higher than themselves, will not leave him resolution to assert the liberty of choice.

But, though we suppose that a man by his fortune can avoid the necessity of dependance, and by his spirit can repel the usurpations of patronage, yet he may easily, by writing long, happen to write ill. There is a general succession of events in which contraries are produced by periodical vicissitudes; labour and care are rewarded with success, success produces confidence, confidence relaxes industry, and negligence ruins that reputation which accuracy had raised.

He that happens not to be lulled by praise into supineness, may be animated by it to undertakings above his strength, or incited to fancy himself alike qualified for every kind of composition, and able to comply with the publick taste through all its variations. By some opinion like this, many men have been engaged, at an advanced age, in attempts which they had not time to complete, and after a few weak efforts, sunk into the grave with vexation to see the rising generation gain ground upon them. From these failures the highest genius is not exempt; that judgment which appears so penetrating, when it is employed

upon the works of others, very often fails where interest or passion can exert their power. We are blinded in examining our own labours by innumerable prejudices. Our juvenile compositions please us, because they bring to our minds the remembrance of youth; our later performances we are ready to esteem, because we are unwilling to think that we have made no improvement; what flows easily from the pen charms us, because we read with pleasure that which flatters our opinion of our own powers; what was composed with great struggles of the mind we do not easily reject, because we cannot bear that so much labour should be fruitless. But the reader has none of these prepossessions, and wonders that the author is so unlike himself, without considering that the same soil will, with different culture, afford different products.

N° 22. SATURDAY, *June* 2, 1750.

—— Ego nec studium sine divite venâ.
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium; alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amicè.—HOR.

Without a genius learning soars in vain;
And without learning genius sinks again;
Their force united crowns the sprightly reign.—ELPHINSTON.

WIT and LEARNING were the children of Apollo, by different mothers; WIT was the offspring of EUPHROSYNE, and resembled her in cheerfulness and vivacity; LEARNING was born of SOPHIA, and retained her seriousness and caution. As their mothers were rivals, they were bred up by them from their birth in habitual opposition, and all means were so incessantly employed to impress upon them a hatred and contempt of each other, that though Apollo, who foresaw the ill effects of their discord, endeavoured to soften them, by dividing his regard equally between them, yet his impartiality and kindness were without effect; the maternal animosity was deeply rooted, having been intermingled with their first ideas, and was confirmed every hour, as fresh opportunities occurred of

exerting it. No sooner were they of age to be received into the apartments of the other celestials, than WIT began to entertain Venus at her toilet, by aping the solemnity of LEARNING, and LEARNING to divert Minerva at her loom, by exposing the blunders and ignorance of WIT.

Thus they grew up, with malice perpetually increasing, by the encouragement which each received from those whom their mothers had persuaded to patronize and support them; and longed to be admitted to the table of Jupiter, not so much for the hope of gaining honour, as of excluding a rival from all pretensions to regard, and of putting an everlasting stop to the progress of that influence which either believed the other to have obtained by mean arts and false appearances.

At last the day came, when they were both, with the usual solemnities, received into the class of superior deities, and allowed to take nectar from the hand of Hebe. But from that hour CONCORD lost her authority at the table of Jupiter. The rivals, animated by their new dignity, and incited by the alternate applauses of the associate powers, harassed each other by incessant contests, with such a regular vicissitude of victory, that neither was depressed.

It was observable, that, at the beginning of every debate, the advantage was on the side of WIT; and that, at the first sallies, the whole assembly sparkled, according to Homer's expression, with unextinguishable merriment. But LEARNING would reserve her strength till the burst of applause was over, and the languor with which the violence of joy is always succeeded, began to promise more calm and patient attention. She then attempted her defence, and, by comparing one part of her antagonist's objections with another, commonly made him confute himself; or, by shewing how small a part of the question he had taken into his view, proved that his opinion could have no weight. The audience began gradually to lay aside their prepossessions, and rose, at

last, with great veneration for LEARNING, but with greater kindness for WIT.

Their conduct was, whenever they desired to recommend themselves to distinction, entirely opposite. WIT was daring and adventurous; LEARNING cautious and deliberate. WIT thought nothing reproachful but dulness; LEARNING was afraid of no imputation but that of errour. WIT answered before he understood, lest his quickness of apprehension should be questioned; LEARNING paused, where there was no difficulty, lest any insidious sophism should lie undiscovered. WIT perplexed every debate by rapidity and confusion; LEARNING tired the hearers with endless distinctions, and prolonged the dispute without advantage, by proving that which never was denied. WIT, in hopes of shining, would venture to produce what he had not considered, and often succeeded beyond his own expectation, by following the train of a lucky thought; LEARNING would reject every new motion, for fear of being entangled in consequences which she could not foresee, and was often hindered, by her caution, from pressing her advantages, and subduing her opponent.

Both had prejudices, which in some degree hindered their progress towards perfection, and left them open to attacks. Novelty was the darling of WIT, and Antiquity of LEARNING. To WIT, all that was new was specious; to LEARNING, whatever was ancient was venerable. WIT, however, seldom failed to divert those whom he could not convince, and to convince was not often his ambition; LEARNING always supported her opinion with so many collateral truths, that, when the cause was decided against her, her arguments were remembered with admiration.

Nothing was more common, on either side, than to quit their proper characters, and to hope for a complete conquest by the use of the weapons which had been employed against them. WIT would sometimes labour a syllogism, and LEARNING distort her features with a

jest; but they always suffered by the experiment, and betrayed themselves to confutation or contempt. The seriousness of WIT was without dignity, and the merriment of LEARNING without vivacity.

Their contests, by long continuance, grew at last important, and the divinities broke into parties. WIT was taken into protection of the laughter-loving Venus, had a retinue allowed him of SMILES and JESTS, and was often permitted to dance among the GRACES. LEARNING still continued the favourite of Minerva, and seldom went out of her palace without a train of the severer virtues, CHASTITY, TEMPERANCE, FORTITUDE, and LABOUR. WIT, cohabiting with MALICE, had a son named SATIRE, who followed him, carrying a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, which, where they once drew blood, could by no skill ever be extracted. These arrows he frequently shot at LEARNING, when she was most earnestly or usefully employed, engaged in abstruse inquiries, or giving instructions to her followers. Minerva therefore deputed CRITICISM to her aid, who generally broke the point of SATIRE's arrows, turned them aside, or retorted them on himself.

Jupiter was at last angry that the peace of the heavenly regions should be in perpetual danger of violation, and resolved to dismiss these troublesome antagonists to the lower world. Hither therefore they came, and carried on their ancient quarrel among mortals, nor was either long without zealous votaries. WIT, by his gaiety, captivated the young; and LEARNING, by her authority, influenced the old. Their power quickly appeared by very eminent effects: theatres were built for the reception of WIT, and colleges endowed for the residence of LEARNING. Each party endeavoured to outvie the other in cost and magnificence, and to propagate an opinion, that it was necessary, from the first entrance into life, to enlist in one of the factions; and that none could hope for the regard of either divinity, who had once entered the temple of the rival power.

There were indeed a class of mortals, by whom WIT and LEARNING were equally disregarded: these were the devotees of Plutus, the god of riches; among these it seldom happened that the gaiety of WIT could raise a smile, or the eloquence of LEARNING procure attention. In revenge of this contempt they agreed to incite their followers against them; but the forces that were sent on those expeditions frequently betrayed their trust; and, in contempt of the orders which they had received flattered the rich in publick, while they scorned them in their hearts; and when, by this treachery, they had obtained the favour of Plutus, affected to look with an air of superiority on those who still remained in the service of WIT and LEARNING.

Disgusted with these desertions, the two rivals, at the same time, petitioned Jupiter for re-admission to their native habitations. Jupiter thundered on the right hand, and they prepared to obey the happy summons. WIT readily spread his wings and soared aloft, but not being able to see far was bewildered in the pathless immensity of the ethereal spaces. LEARNING, who knew the way, shook her pinions; but for want of natural vigour could only take short flights: so, after many efforts, they both sunk again to the ground, and learned, from their mutual distress, the necessity of union. They therefore joined their hands, and renewed their flight: LEARNING was borne up by the vigour of WIT, and WIT guided by the perspicacity of LEARNING. They soon reached the dwellings of Jupiter, and were so endeared to each other, that they lived afterwards in perpetual concord. WIT persuaded LEARNING to converse with the GRACES, and LEARNING engaged WIT in the service of the VIRTUES. They were now the favourites of all the powers of heaven, and gladdened every banquet by their presence. They soon after married, at the command of Jupiter, and had a numerous progeny of ARTS and SCIENCES.

N° 23. TUESDAY, *June* 5, 1750.

Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur;
Poscentur vario multum diversa palato.—HOR.

Three guests I have, dissenting at my feast,
Requiring each to gratify his taste
With different food.—FRANCIS.

THAT every man should regulate his actions by his own conscience, without any regard to the opinions of the rest of the world, is one of the first precepts of moral prudence; justified not only by the suffrage of reason, which declares that none of the gifts of heaven are to lie useless, but by the voice likewise of experience, which will soon inform us that, if we make the praise or blame of others the rule of our conduct, we shall be distracted by a boundless variety of irreconcileable judgments, be held in perpetual suspence between contrary impulses, and consult for ever without determination.

I know not whether, for the same reason, it is not necessary for an author to place some confidence in his own skill, and to satisfy himself in the knowledge that he has not deviated from the established laws of composition, without submitting his works to frequent examinations before he gives them to the publick, or endeavouring to secure success by a solicitous conformity to advice and criticism.

It is, indeed, quickly discoverable, that consultation and compliance can conduce little to the perfection of any literary performance; for whoever is so doubtful of his own abilities as to encourage the remarks of others, will find himself every day embarrassed with new difficulties, and will harass his mind, in vain, with the hopeless labour of uniting heterogeneous ideas, digesting independent hints, and collecting into one point the several rays of borrowed light, emitted often with contrary directions.

Of all authors, those who retail their labours in periodical sheets would be most unhappy, if they were much to regard the censures or the admonitions of their readers:

for, as their works are not sent into the world at once, but by small parts in gradual succession, it is always imagined, by those who think themselves qualified to give instructions, that they may yet redeem their former failings by hearkening to better judges, and supply the deficiencies of their plan, by the help of the criticisms which are so liberally afforded.

I have had occasion to observe, sometimes with vexation, and sometimes with merriment, the different temper with which the same man reads a printed and manuscript performance. When a book is once in the hands of the publick, it is considered as permanent and unalterable; and the reader, if he be free from personal prejudices, takes it up with no other intention than of pleasing or instructing himself: he accommodates his mind to the author's design; and, having no interest in refusing the amusement that is offered him, never interrupts his own tranquillity by studied cavils, or destroys his satisfaction in that which is already well, by an anxious inquiry how it might be better; but is often contented without pleasure, and pleased without perfection.

But if the same man be called to consider the merit of a production yet unpublished, he brings an imagination heated with objections to passages which he has yet never heard; he invokes all the powers of criticism, and stores his memory with Taste and Grace, Purity and Delicacy, Manners and Unities, sounds which, having been once uttered by those that understood them, have been since reechoed without meaning, and kept up, to the disturbance of the world, by a constant repercussion from one coxcomb to another. He considers himself as obliged to shew, by some proof of his abilities, that he is not consulted to no purpose, and therefore watches every opening for objection, and looks round for every opportunity to propose some specious alteration. Such opportunities a very small degree of sagacity will enable him to find; for, in every work of imagination, the disposition of parts, the insertion of incidents, and the use of decorations, may be varied a thousand ways with equal propriety; and as in

things nearly equal, that will always seem best to every man which he himself produces; the critick, whose business is only to propose, without the care of execution, can never want the satisfaction of believing that he has suggested very important improvements, nor the power of enforcing his advice by arguments, which, as they appear convincing to himself, either his kindness or his vanity will press obstinately and importunately, without suspicion that he may possibly judge too hastily in favour of his own advice, or inquiry whether the advantage of the new scheme be proportionate to the labour.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that an orator ought not so much to select the strongest arguments which his cause admits, as to employ all which his imagination can afford: for, in pleading, those reasons are of most value, which will most affect the judges; and the judges, says he, will be always most touched with that which they had before conceived. Every man who is called to give his opinion of a performance, decides upon the same principle; he first suffers himself to form expectations, and then is angry at his disappointment. He lets his imagination rove at large, and wonders that another, equally unconfined in the boundless ocean of possibility, takes a different course.

But, though the rule of Pliny be judiciously laid down, it is not applicable to the writer's cause, because there always lies an appeal from domestick criticism to a higher judicature, and the publick, which is never corrupted, nor often deceived, is to pass the last sentence upon literary claims.

Of the great force of preconceived opinions I had many proofs, when I first entered upon this weekly labour. My readers having, from the performances of my predecessors, established an idea of unconnected essays, to which they believed all future authors under a necessity of conforming, were impatient of the least deviation from their system, and numerous remonstrances were accordingly made by each, as he found his favourite subject omitted

or delayed. Some were angry that the RAMBLER did not, like the SPECTATOR, introduce himself to the acquaintance of the publick, by an account of his own birth and studies, an enumeration of his adventures, and a description of his physiognomy. Others soon began to remark that he was a solemn, serious, dictatorial writer, without sprightliness or gaiety, and called out with vehemence for mirth and humour. Another admonished him to have a special eye upon the various clubs of this great city, and informed him that much of the Spectator's vivacity was laid out upon such assemblies. He has been censured for not imitating the politeness of his predecessors, having hitherto neglected to take the ladies under his protection, and give them rules for the just opposition of colours, and the proper dimensions of ruffles and pinners. He has been required by one to fix a particular censure upon those matrons who play at cards with spectacles: and another is very much offended whenever he meets with a speculation in which naked precepts are comprised without the illustration of examples and characters.

I make not the least question that all these monitors intend the promotion of my design, and the instruction of my readers; but they do not know, or do not reflect, that an author has a rule of choice peculiar to himself; and selects those subjects which he is best qualified to treat, by the course of his studies, or the accidents of his life: that some topicks of amusement have been already treated with too much success to invite a competition; and that he who endeavours to gain many readers must try various arts of invitation, essay every avenue of pleasure, and make frequent changes in his methods of approach.

I cannot but consider myself, amidst this tumult of criticism, as a ship in a poetical tempest, impelled at the same time by opposite winds, and dashed by the waves from every quarter, but held upright by the contrariety of the assailants, and secured in some measure by multiplicity of distress. Had the opinion of my censurers been unanimous, it might perhaps have overset my resolution;

but since I find them at variance with each other, I can, without scruple, neglect them, and endeavour to gain the favour of the publick by following the direction of my own reason, and indulging the sallies of my own imagination.

N° 24. SATURDAY, *June* 9, 1750.

Nemo in sese tentat descendere.—PERSIUS.

None, none descends into himself.—DRYDEN.

AMONG the precepts, or aphorisms, admitted by general consent, and inculcated by frequent repetition, there is none more famous among the masters of ancient wisdom, than that compendious lesson, Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, *Be acquainted with thyself;* ascribed by some to an oracle, and by others to Chilo of Lacedemon.

This is, indeed, a dictate, which, in the whole extent of its meaning, may be said to comprise all the speculation requisite to a moral agent. For what more can be necessary to the regulation of life, than the knowledge of our original, our end, our duties, and our relation to other beings?

It is however very improbable that the first author, whoever he was, intended to be understood in this unlimited and complicated sense; for of the inquiries, which in so large an acceptation it would seem to recommend, some are too extensive for the powers of man, and some require light from above, which was not yet indulged to the heathen world.

We might have had more satisfaction concerning the original import of this celebrated sentence, if history had informed us, whether it was uttered as a general instruction to mankind, or as a particular caution to some private inquirer; whether it was applied to some single occasion, or laid down as the universal rule of life.

There will occur, upon the slightest consideration, many possible circumstances, in which this monition might

very properly be inforced: for every errour in human conduct must arise from ignorance in ourselves, either perpetual or temporary; and happen either because we do not know what is best and fittest, or because our knowledge is at the time of action not present to the mind.

When a man employs himself upon remote and unnecessary subjects, and wastes his life upon questions which cannot be resolved, and of which the solution would conduce very little to the advancement of happiness; when he lavishes his hours in calculating the weight of the terraqueous globe, or in adjusting successive systems of worlds beyond the reach of the telescope; he may be very properly recalled from his excursions by this precept, and reminded, that there is a nearer being with which it is his duty to be more acquainted; and from which his attention has hitherto been withheld by studies to which he has no other motive than vanity or curiosity.

The great praise of Socrates is, that he drew the wits of Greece, by his instruction and example, from the vain pursuit of natural philosophy to moral inquiries, and turned their thoughts from stars and tides, and matter and motion, upon the various modes of virtue, and relations of life. All his lectures were but commentaries upon this saying; if we suppose the knowledge of ourselves recommended by Chilo, in opposition to other inquiries less suitable to the state of man.

The great fault of men of learning is still, that they offend against this rule, and appear willing to study any thing rather than themselves; for which reason they are often despised by those with whom they imagine themselves above comparison; despised, as useless to common purposes, as unable to conduct the most trivial affairs, and unqualified to perform those offices by which the concatenation of society is preserved, and mutual tenderness excited and maintained.

Gelidus is a man of great penetration and deep researches. Having a mind naturally formed for the abstruser sciences, he can comprehend intricate combina-

tions without confusion, and being of a temper naturally cool and equal, he is seldom interrupted by his passions in the pursuit of the longest chain of unexpected consequences. He has, therefore, a long time indulged hopes, that the solution of some problems, by which the professors of science have been hitherto baffled, is reserved for his genius and industry. He spends his time in the highest room of his house, into which none of his family are suffered to enter; and when he comes down to his dinner or his rest, he walks about like a stranger that is there only for a day, without any tokens of regard or tenderness. He has totally divested himself of all human sensations; he has neither eye for beauty, nor ear for complaint; he neither rejoices at the good fortune of his nearest friend, nor mourns for any publick or private calamity. Having once received a letter, and given it his servant to read, he was informed, that it was written by his brother, who, being shipwrecked, had swum naked to land, and was destitute of necessaries in a foreign country. Naked and destitute! says Gelidus, reach down the last volume of meteorological observations, extract an exact account of the wind, and note it carefully in the diary of the weather.

The family of Gelidus once broke into his study, to shew him that a town at a small distance was on fire; and in a few moments a servant came to tell him, that the flame had caught so many houses on both sides, that the inhabitants were confounded, and began to think of rather escaping with their lives, than saving their dwellings. What you tell me, says Gelidus, is very probable, for fire naturally acts in a circle.

Thus lives this great philosopher, insensible to every spectacle of distress, and unmoved by the loudest call of social nature, for want of considering that men are designed for the succour and comfort of each other; that though there are hours which may be laudably spent upon knowledge not immediately useful, yet the first attention is due to practical virtue; and that he may be justly driven out from the commerce of mankind, who has so far ab-

stracted himself from the species, as to partake neither of the joys nor griefs of others, but neglects the endearments of his wife, and the caresses of his children, to count the drops of rain, note the changes of the wind, and calculate the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter.

I shall reserve to some future paper the religious and important meaning of this epitome of wisdom, and only remark, that it may be applied to the gay and light, as well as to the grave and solemn parts of life; and that not only the philosopher may forfeit his pretences to real learning, but the wit and beauty may miscarry in their schemes, by the want of this universal requisite, the knowledge of themselves.

It is surely for no other reason, that we see such numbers resolutely struggling against nature, and contending for that which they never can attain, endeavouring to unite contradictions, and determined to excel in characters inconsistent with each other; that stock-jobbers affect dress, gaiety, and elegance, and mathematicians labour to be wits; that the soldier teazes his acquaintance with questions in theology, and the academick hopes to divert the ladies by a recital of his gallantries. That absurdity of pride could proceed only from ignorance of themselves, by which Garth attempted criticism, and Congreve waved his title to dramatick reputation, and desired to be considered only as a gentleman.

Euphues, with great parts, and extensive knowledge, has a clouded aspect, and ungracious form; yet it has been his ambition, from his first entrance into life, to distinguish himself by particularities in his dress, to outvie beaux in embroidery, to import new trimmings, and to be foremost in the fashion. Euphues has turned on his exterior appearance, that attention which would always have produced esteem, had it been fixed upon his mind; and though his virtues and abilities have preserved him from the contempt which he has so diligently solicited, he has, at least, raised one impediment to his reputation; since all can judge of his dress, but few of

his understanding; and many who discern that he is a fop, are unwilling to believe that he can be wise.

There is one instance in which the ladies are particularly unwilling to observe the rule of Chilo. They are desirous to hide from themselves the advances of age, and endeavour too frequently to supply the sprightliness and bloom of youth by artificial beauty and forced vivacity. They hope to inflame the heart by glances which have lost their fire, or melt it by languor which is no longer delicate; they play over the airs which pleased at a time when they were expected only to please, and forget that airs in time ought to give place to virtues. They continue to trifle, because they could once trifle agreeably, till those who shared their early pleasures are withdrawn to more serious engagements; and are scarcely awakened from their dream of perpetual youth, but by the scorn of those whom they endeavour to rival.

N° 25. TUESDAY, *June* 12, 1750.

Possunt quia posse videntur.—VIRGIL.

For they can conquer who believe they can.—DRYDEN.

THERE are some vices and errours which, though often fatal to those in whom they are found, have yet, by the universal consent of mankind, been considered as intitled to some degree of respect, or have, at least, been exempted from contemptuous infamy, and condemned by the severest moralists with pity rather than detestation.

A constant and invariable example of this general partiality will be found in the different regard which has always been shewn to rashness and cowardice, two vices, of which, though they may be conceived equally distant from the middle point, where true fortitude is placed, and may equally injure any publick or private interest, yet the one is never mentioned without some kind of veneration, and the other always considered as a topick of unlimited and licentious censure, on which all the virulence of reproach may be lawfully exerted.

The same distinction is made, by the common suffrage, between profusion and avarice, and, perhaps, between many other opposite vices; and, as I have found reason to pay great regard to the voice of the people, in cases where knowledge has been forced upon them by experience, without long deductions or deep researches, I am inclined to believe that this distribution of respect is not without some agreement with the nature of things; and that in the faults, which are thus invested with extraordinary privileges, there are generally some latent principles of merit, some possibilities of future virtue, which may, by degrees, break from obstruction, and by time and opportunity be brought into act.

It may be laid down as an axiom, that it is more easy to take away superfluities than to supply defects; and therefore he that is culpable, because he has passed the middle point of virtue, is always accounted a fairer object of hope, than he who fails by falling short. The one has all that perfection requires, and more, but the excess may be easily retrenched; the other wants the qualities requisite to excellence, and who can tell how he shall obtain them? We are certain that the horse may be taught to keep pace with his fellows, whose fault is that he leaves them behind. We know that a few strokes of the axe will lop a cedar; but what arts of cultivation can elevate a shrub?

To walk with circumspection and steadiness in the right path, at an equal distance between the extremes of errour, ought to be the constant endeavour of every reasonable being; nor can I think those teachers of moral wisdom much to be honoured as benefactors to mankind, who are always enlarging upon the difficulty of our duties, and providing rather excuses for vice, than incentives to virtue.

But, since to most it will happen often, and to all sometimes, that there will be a deviation towards one side or the other, we ought always to employ our vigilance, with most attention, on that enemy from which

there is the greatest danger, and to stray, if we must stray, towards those parts from whence we may quickly and easily return.

Among other opposite qualities of the mind, which may become dangerous, though in different degrees, I have often had occasion to consider the contrary effects of presumption and despondency; of heady confidence, which promises victory without contest, and heartless pusillanimity, which shrinks back from the thought of great undertakings, confounds difficulty with impossibility, and considers all advancement towards any new attainment as irreversibly prohibited.

Presumption will be easily corrected. Every experiment will teach caution, and miscarriages will hourly shew, that attempts are not always rewarded with success. The most precipitate ardour will, in time, be taught the necessity of methodical gradation and preparatory measures; and the most daring confidence be convinced that neither merit, nor abilities, can command events.

It is the advantage of vehemence and activity, that they are always hastening to their own reformation; because they incite us to try whether our expectations are well grounded, and therefore detect the deceits which they are apt to occasion. But timidity is a disease of the mind more obstinate and fatal; for a man once persuaded that any impediment is insuperable, has given it, with respect to himself, that strength and weight which it had not before. He can scarcely strive with vigour and perseverance, when he has no hope of gaining the victory; and since he never will try his strength, can never discover the unreasonableness of his fears.

There is often to be found in men devoted to literature a kind of intellectual cowardice, which whoever converses much among them, may observe frequently to depress the alacrity of enterprise, and, by consequence, to retard the improvement of science. They have annexed to every species of knowledge some chimerical character of terrour and inhibition, which they transmit, without much reflec-

tion, from one to another; they first fright themselves, and then propagate the panick to their scholars and acquaintance. One study is inconsistent with a lively imagination, another with a solid judgment; one is improper in the early parts of life, another requires so much time, that it is not to be attempted at an advanced age; one is dry and contracts the sentiments, another is diffuse and overburdens the memory; one is insufferable to taste and delicacy, and another wears out life in the study of words, and is useless to a wise man, who desires only the knowledge of things.

But of all the bugbears by which the *Infantes barbati*, boys both young and old, have been hitherto frighted from digressing into new tracts of learning, none has been more mischievously efficacious than an opinion that every kind of knowledge requires a peculiar genius, or mental constitution, framed for the reception of some ideas, and the exclusion of others; and that to him whose genius is not adapted to the study which he prosecutes, all labour shall be vain and fruitless, vain as an endeavour to mingle oil and water, or, in the language of chemistry, to amalgamate bodies of heterogeneous principles.

This opinion we may reasonably suspect to have been propagated, by vanity, beyond the truth. It is natural for those who have raised a reputation by any science, to exalt themselves as endowed by heaven with peculiar powers, or marked out by an extraordinary designation for their profession; and to fright competitors away by representing the difficulties with which they must contend, and the necessity of qualities which are supposed to be not generally conferred, and which no man can know, but by experience, whether he enjoys.

To this discouragement it may be possibly answered, that since a genius, whatever it be, is like fire in the flint, only to be produced by collision with a proper subject, it is the business of every man to try whether his faculties may not happily co-operate with his desires; and since they whose proficiency he admires, knew their own force

only by the event, he needs but engage in the same undertaking with equal spirit, and may reasonably hope for equal success.

There is another species of false intelligence, given by those who profess to shew the way to the summit of knowledge, of equal tendency to depress the mind with false distrust of itself, and weaken it by needless solicitude and dejection. When a scholar whom they desire to animate, consults them at his entrance on some new study, it is common to make flattering representations of its pleasantness and facility. Thus they generally attain one of two ends almost equally desirable; they either incite his industry by elevating his hopes, or produce a high opinion of their own abilities, since they are supposed to relate only what they have found, and to have proceeded with no less ease than they promise to their followers.

The student, inflamed by this encouragement, sets forward in the new path, and proceeds a few steps with great alacrity, but he soon finds asperities and intricacies of which he has not been forewarned, and imagining that none ever were so entangled or fatigued before him, sinks suddenly into despair, and desists as from an expedition in which fate opposes him. Thus his terrours are multiplied by his hopes, and he is defeated without resistance, because he had no expectation of an enemy.

Of these treacherous instructors, the one destroys industry, by declaring that industry is vain, the other by representing it as needless; the one cuts away the root of hope, the other raises it only to be blasted: the one confines his pupil to the shore, by telling him that his wreck is certain, the other sends him to sea, without preparing him for tempests.

False hopes and false terrours are equally to be avoided. Every man who proposes to grow eminent by learning, should carry in his mind, at once, the difficulty of excellence, and the force of industry; and remember that fame is not conferred but as the recompence of labour, and that labour vigorously continued, has not often failed of its reward.

N° 26. SATURDAY, *June* 16, 1750.

Ingentes dominos, et claræ nomina famæ,
Illustrique graves nobilitate domos
Devita, et longè cautus fuge; contrahe vela,
Et te littoribus cymba propinqua vehat.—SENECA.

Each mighty lord, big with a pompous name,
And each high house of fortune and of fame,
With caution fly; contract thy ample sails,
And near the shore improve the gentle gales.—ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

IT is usual for men, engaged in the same pursuits, to be inquisitive after the conduct and fortune of each other; and, therefore, I suppose it will not be unpleasing to you, to read an account of the various changes which have happened in part of a life devoted to literature. My narrative will not exhibit any great variety of events, or extraordinary revolutions; but may, perhaps, be not less useful, because I shall relate nothing which is not likely to happen to a thousand others.

I was born heir to a very small fortune, and left by my father, whom I cannot remember, to the care of an uncle. He having no children, always treated me as his son, and finding in me those qualities which old men easily discover in sprightly children, when they happen to love them, declared that a genius like mine should never be lost for want of cultivation. He therefore placed me, for the usual time, at a great school, and then sent me to the university, with a larger allowance than my own patrimony would have afforded, that I might not keep mean company, but learn to become my dignity when I should be made lord chancellor, which he often lamented, that the increase of his infirmities was very likely to preclude him from seeing.

This exuberance of money displayed itself in gaiety of appearance, and wantonness of expence, and introduced me to the acquaintance of those whom the same superfluity of fortune betrayed to the same licence and ostentation: young heirs, who pleased themselves with a re-

mark very frequent in their mouths, that though they were sent by their fathers to the university, they were not under the necessity of living by their learning.

Among men of this class I easily obtained the reputation of a great genius, and was persuaded, that with such liveliness of imagination, and delicacy of sentiment, I should never be able to submit to the drudgery of the law. I therefore gave myself wholly to the more airy and elegant parts of learning, and was often so much elated with my superiority to the youths with whom I conversed, that I began to listen, with great attention, to those that recommended to me a wider and more conspicuous theatre; and was particularly touched with an observation made by one of my friends: That it was not by lingering in the university that Prior became ambassador, or Addison secretary of state.

This desire was hourly increased by the solicitation of my companions, who removing one by one to London, as the caprice of their relations allowed them, or the legal dismission from the hands of their guardians put it in their power, never failed to send an account of the beauty and felicity of the new world, and to remonstrate how much was lost by every hour's continuance in a place of retirement and constraint.

My uncle in the mean time frequently harassed me with monitory letters, which I sometimes neglected to open for a week after I received them, and generally read in a tavern, with such comments as might shew how much I was superiour to instruction or advice. I could not but wonder how a man confined to the country, and unacquainted with the present system of things, should imagine himself qualified to instruct a rising genius, born to give laws to the age, refine its taste, and multiply its pleasures.

The postman, however, still continued to bring me new remonstrances; for my uncle was very little depressed by the ridicule and reproach which he never heard. But men of parts have quick resentments; it was impossible to bear his usurpations for ever; and I resolved, once for

all, to make him an example to those who imagine themselves wise because they are old, and to teach young men, who are too tame under representation, in what manner grey-bearded insolence ought to be treated. I therefore one evening took my pen in hand, and after having animated myself with a catch, wrote a general answer to all his precepts with such vivacity of turn, such elegance of irony, and such asperity of sarcasm, that I convulsed a a large company with universal laughter, disturbed the neighbourhood with vociferations of applause, and five days afterwards was answered, that I must be content to live on my own estate.

This contraction of my income gave me no disturbance; for a genius like mine was out of the reach of want. I had friends that would be proud to open their purses at my call, and prospects of such advancement as would soon reconcile my uncle, whom, upon mature deliberation, I resolved to receive into favour without insisting on any acknowledgment of his offence, when the splendour of my condition should induce him to wish for my countenance. I therefore went up to London, before I had shewn the alteration of my condition by any abatement of my way of living, and was received by all my academical acquaintance with triumph and congratulation. I was immediately introduced among the wits and men of spirit; and in a short time had divested myself of all my scholar's gravity, and obtained the reputation of a pretty fellow.

You will easily believe that I had no great knowledge of the world; yet I had been hindered, by the general disinclination every man feels to confess poverty, from telling to any one the resolution of my uncle, and for some time subsisted upon the stock of money which I had brought with me, and contributed my share as before to all our entertainments. But my pocket was soon emptied, and I was obliged to ask my friends for a small sum. This was a favour, which we had often reciprocally received from one another; they supposed my wants only accidental, and therefore willingly supplied them. In a short

time I found a necessity of asking again, and was again treated with the same civility; but the third time they began to wonder what that old rogue my uncle could mean by sending a gentleman to town without money; and when they gave me what I asked for, advised me to stipulate for more regular remittances.

This somewhat disturbed my dream of constant affluence; but I was three days after completely awaked; for entering the tavern where they met every evening, I found the waiters remitted their complaisance, and, instead of contending to light me up stairs, suffered me to wait for some minutes by the bar. When I came to my company, I found them unusually grave and formal, and one of them took the hint to turn the conversation upon the misconduct of young men, and enlarged upon the folly of frequenting the company of men of fortune, without being able to support the expence, an observation which the rest contributed either to enforce by repetition, or to illustrate by examples. Only one of them tried to divert the discourse, and endeavoured to direct my attention to remote questions, and common topicks.

A man guilty of poverty easily believes himself suspected. I went, however, next morning to breakfast with him who appeared ignorant of the drift of the conversation, and by a series of inquiries, drawing still nearer to the point, prevailed on him, not, perhaps, much against his will, to inform me that Mr. *Dash*, whose father was a wealthly attorney near my native place, had, the morning before, received an account of my uncle's resentment, and communicated his intelligence with the utmost industry of grovelling insolence.

It was now no longer practicable to consort with my former friends, unless I would be content to be used as an inferior guest, who was to pay for his wine by mirth and flattery; a character which, if I could not escape it, I resolved to endure only among those who had never known me in the pride of plenty. I changed my lodgings, and frequented the coffee-houses in a different region of the town; where I was very quickly distinguished by several

young gentlemen of high birth, and large estates, and began again to amuse my imagination with hopes of preferment, though not quite so confidently as when I had less experience.

The first great conquest which this new scene enabled me to gain over myself was, when I submitted to confess to a party, who invited me to an expensive diversion, that my revenues were not equal to such golden pleasures; they would not suffer me, however, to stay behind, and with great reluctance I yielded to be treated. I took that opportunity of recommending myself to some office or employment, which they unanimously promised to procure me by their joint interest.

I had now entered into a state of dependence, and had hopes, or fears, from almost every man I saw. If it be unhappy to have one patron, what is his misery who has many? I was obliged to comply with a thousand caprices, to concur in a thousand follies, and to countenance a thousand errours. I endured innumerable mortifications, if not from cruelty, at least from negligence, which will creep in upon the kindest and most delicate minds, when they converse without the mutual awe of equal condition. I found the spirit and vigour of liberty every moment sinking in me, and a servile fear of displeasing stealing by degrees upon all my behaviour, till no word, or look, or action, was my own. As the solicitude to please increased, the power of pleasing grew less, and I was always clouded with diffidence where it was most my interest and wish to shine.

My patrons, considering me as belonging to the community, and, therefore, not the charge of any particular person, made no scruple of neglecting any opportunity of promoting me, which every one thought more properly the business of another. An account of my expectations and disappointments, and the succeeding vicissitudes of my life, I shall give you in my following letter, which will be, I hope, of use to shew how ill he forms his schemes, who expects happiness without freedom.

I am, &c.

N° 27. Tuesday, *June*, 19, 1750.

——— *Pauperiem metuens potiore metallis*
Libertate caret.——Hor.

So he, who poverty with horror views,
Who sells his freedom in exchange for gold,
(Freedom for mines of wealth too cheaply sold)
Shall make eternal servitude his fate,
And feel a haughty master's galling weight.—Francis.

MR. RAMBLER,

As it is natural for every man to think himself of importance, your knowledge of the world will incline you to forgive me, if I imagine your curiosity so much excited by the former part of my narration, as to make you desire that I should proceed without any unnecessary arts of connection. I shall, therefore, not keep you longer in such suspence, as perhaps my performance may not compensate.

In the gay company with which I was now united, I found those allurements and delights, which the friendship of young men always affords; there was that openness which naturally produced confidence, that affability which, in some measure, softened dependance, and that ardour of profession which incited hope. When our hearts were dilated with merriment, promises were poured out with unlimited profusion, and life and fortune were but a scanty sacrifice to friendship; but when the hour came, at which any effort was to be made, I had generally the vexation to find that my interest weighed nothing against the slightest amusement, and that every petty avocation was found a sufficient plea for continuing me in uncertainty and want. Their kindness was indeed sincere: when they promised, they had no intention to deceive; but the same juvenile warmth which kindled their benevolence, gave force in the same proportion to every other passion, and I was forgotten as soon as any new pleasures seized on their attention.

Vagario told me one evening, that all my perplexities

should be soon at an end, and desired me, from that instant, to throw upon him all care of my fortune, for a post of considerable value was that day become vacant, and he knew his interest sufficient to procure it in the morning. He desired me to call on him early, that he might be dressed soon enough to wait on the minister before any other application should be made. I came as he appointed, with all the flame of gratitude, and was told by his servant, that having found at his lodgings, when he came home, an acquaintance who was going to travel, he had been persuaded to accompany him to Dover, and that they had taken post-horses two hours before day.

I was once very near to preferment by the kindness of Charinus, who, at my request, went to beg a place, which he thought me likely to fill with great reputation, and in which I should have many opportunities of promoting his interest in return; and he pleased himself with imagining the mutual benefits that we should confer, and the advances that we should make by our united strength. Away therefore he went, equally warm with friendship and ambition, and left me to prepare acknowledgments against his return. At length he came back, and told me that he had met in his way a party going to breakfast in the country, that the ladies importuned him too much to be refused, and that having passed the morning with them, he was come back to dress himself for a ball, to which he was invited for the evening.

I have suffered several disappointments from tailors and periwig-makers, who, by neglecting to perform their work, withheld my patrons from court; and once failed of an establishment for life by the delay of a servant, sent to a neighbouring shop to replenish a snuff-box.

At last I thought my solicitude at an end, for an office fell into the gift of Hippodamus's father, who being then in the country, could not very speedily fill it, and whose fondness would not have suffered him to refuse his son a less reasonable request. Hippodamus therefore set forward with great expedition, and I expected every hour

an account of his success. A long time I waited without any intelligence, but at last received a letter from Newmarket, by which I was informed that the races were begun, and I knew the vehemence of his passions too well to imagine that he could refuse himself his favourite amusement.

You will not wonder that I was at last weary of the patronage of young men, especially as I found them not generally to promise much greater fidelity as they advanced in life; for I observed that what they gained in steadiness they lost in benevolence, and grew colder to my interest as they became more diligent to promote their own. I was convinced that their liberality was only profuseness, that as chance directed, they were equally generous to vice and virtue, that they were warm but because they were thoughtless, and counted the support of a friend only amongst other gratifications of passion.

My resolution was now to ingratiate myself with men whose reputation was established, whose high stations enabled them to prefer me, and whose age exempted them from sudden changes of inclination. I was considered as a man of parts, and therefore easily found admission to the table of Hilarius, the celebrated orator, renowned equally for the extent of his knowledge, the elegance of his diction, and the acuteness of his wit. Hilarius received me with an appearance of great satisfaction, produced to me all his friends, and directed to me that part of his discourse in which he most endeavoured to display his imagination. I had now learned my own interest enough to supply him opportunities for smart remarks and gay sallies, which I never failed to echo and applaud. Thus I was gaining every hour on his affections, till unfortunately, when the assembly was more splendid than usual, his desire of admiration prompted him to turn his raillery upon me. I bore it for some time with great submission, and success encouraged him to redouble his attacks; at last my vanity prevailed over my prudence, I retorted his irony with such spirit, that Hilarius, unaccus-

tomed to resistance, was disconcerted, and soon found means of convincing me that his purpose was not to encourage a rival, but to foster a parasite.

I was then taken into the familiarity of Argutio, a nobleman eminent for judgment and criticism. He had contributed to my reputation by the praises which he had often bestowed upon my writings, in which he owned that there were proofs of a genius that might rise to high degrees of excellence, when time or information had reduced its exuberance. He therefore required me to consult him before the publication of any new performance, and commonly proposed innumerable alterations, without sufficient attention to the general design, or regard to my form of style, and mode of imagination. But these corrections he never failed to press as indispensably necessary, and thought the least delay of compliance an act of rebellion. The pride of an author made this treatment insufferable, and I thought any tyranny easier to be borne than that which took from me the use of my understanding.

My next patron was Eutyches, the statesman, who was wholly engaged in publick affairs, and seemed to have no ambition but to be powerful and rich. I found his favour more permanent than that of the others; for there was a certain price at which it might be bought; he allowed nothing to humour, or to affection, but was always ready to pay liberally for the service that he required. His demands were, indeed, very often such as virtue could not easily consent to gratify; but virtue is not to be consulted when men are to raise their fortunes by the favour of the great. His measures were censured; I wrote in his defence, and was recompensed with a place, of which the profits were never received by me without the pangs of remembering that they were the reward of wickedness,—a reward which nothing but that necessity which the consumption of my little estate in these wild pursuits had brought upon me, hindered me from throwing back in the face of my corrupter.

At this time my uncle died without a will, and I be-

came heir to a small fortune. I had resolution to throw off the splendour which reproached me to myself, and retire to an humbler state, in which I am now endeavouring to recover the dignity of virtue, and hope to make some reparation for my crime and follies, by informing others, who may be led after the same pageants, that they are about to engage in a course of life, in which they are to purchase, by a thousand miseries, the privilege of repentance. I am, &c.

EUBULUS.

N° 28. SATURDAY, *June* 23, 1750.

Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui, notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi.—SENECA.

To him! alas! to him, I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear,
Who in his life, flattering his senseless pride,
By being known to all the world beside,
Does not himself, when he is dying, know,
Nor what he is, nor whither he's to go.—COWLEY.

I HAVE shewn, in a late essay, to what errours men are hourly betrayed by a mistaken opinion of their own powers, and a negligent inspection of their own character. But as I then confined my observations to common occurrences and familiar scenes, I think it proper to inquire, how far a nearer acquaintance with ourselves is necessary to our preservation from crimes as well as follies, and how much the attentive study of our own minds may contribute to secure to us the approbation of that Being, to whom we are accountable for our thoughts and our actions, and whose favour must finally constitute our total happiness.

If it be reasonable to estimate the difficulty of any enterprise by frequent miscarriages, it may justly be concluded that it is not easy for a man to know himself; for wheresoever we turn our view, we shall find almost all with whom we converse so nearly as to judge of their sen-

timents, indulging more favourable conceptions of their own virtue than they have been able to impress upon others, and congratulating themselves upon degrees of excellence, which their fondest admirers cannot allow them to have attained.

Those representations of imaginary virtue are generally considered as arts of hypocrisy, and as snares laid for confidence and praise. But I believe the suspicion often unjust; those who thus propagate their own reputation, only extend the fraud by which they have been themselves deceived; for this failing is incident to numbers, who seem to live without designs, competitions, or pursuits; it appears on occasions which promise no accession of honour or of profit, and to persons from whom very little is to be hoped or feared. It is, indeed, not easy to tell how far we may be blinded by the love of ourselves, when we reflect how much a secondary passion can cloud our judgment, and how few faults a man, in the first raptures of love, can discover in the person or conduct of his mistress.

To lay open all the sources from which errour flows in upon him who contemplates his own character, would require more exact knowledge of the human heart, than, perhaps, the most acute and laborious observers have acquired. And since falsehood may be diversified without end, it is not unlikely that every man admits an imposture in some respect peculiar to himself, as his views have been accidentally directed, or his ideas particularly combined.

Some fallacies, however, there are, more frequently insidious, which it may, perhaps, not be useless to detect; because, though they are gross, they may be fatal, and because nothing but attention is necessary to defeat them.

One sophism by which men persuade themselves that they have those virtues which they really want, is formed by the substitution of single acts for habits. A miser who once relieved a friend from the danger of a prison, suffers his imagination to dwell for ever upon his own heroic generosity; he yields his heart up to indignation at those

who are blind to merit, or insensible to misery, and who can please themselves with the enjoyment of that wealth, which they never permit others to partake. From any censures of the world, or reproaches of his conscience, he has an appeal to action and to knowledge: and though his whole life is a course of rapacity and avarice, he concludes himself to be tender and liberal, because he has once performed an act of liberality and tenderness.

As a glass which magnifies objects by the approach of one end to the eye, lessens them by the application of the other, so vices are extenuated by the inversion of that fallacy, by which virtues are augmented. Those faults which we cannot conceal from our own notice, are considered, however frequent, not as habitual corruptions, or settled practices, but as casual failures, and single lapses. A man who has from year to year set his country to sale, either for the gratification of his ambition or resentment, confesses that the heat of party now and then betrays the severest virtue to measures that cannot be seriously defended. He that spends his days and nights in riot and debauchery, owns that his passions oftentimes overpower his resolutions. But each comforts himself that his faults are not without precedent, for the best and the wisest men have given way to the violence of sudden temptations.

There are men who always confound the praise of goodness with the practice, and who believe themselves mild and moderate, charitable and faithful, because they have exerted their eloquence in commendation of mildness, fidelity, and other virtues. This is an errour almost universal among those that converse much with dependents, with such whose fear or interest disposes them to a seeming reverence for any declamation, however enthusiastick, and submission to any boast, however arrogant. Having none to recall their attention to their lives, they rate themselves by the goodness of their opinions, and forget how much more easily men may shew their virtue in their talk than in their actions.

The tribe is likewise very numerous of those who regu-

late their lives, not by the standard of religion, but the measure of other men's virtue; who lull their own remorse with the remembrance of crimes more atrocious than their own, and seem to believe that they are not bad while another can be found worse.

For escaping these and a thousand other deceits, many expedients have been proposed. Some have recommended the frequent consultation of a wise friend, admitted to intimacy, and encouraged to sincerity. But this appears a remedy by no means adapted to general use: for in order to secure the virtue of one, it presupposes more virtue in two than will generally be found. In the first, such a desire of rectitude and amendment, as may incline him to hear his own accusation from the mouth of him whom he esteems, and by whom, therefore, he will always hope that his faults are not discovered; and in the second, such zeal and honesty, as will make him content for his friend's advantage to lose his kindness.

A long life may be passed without finding a friend in whose understanding and virtue we can equally confide, and whose opinion we can value at once for its justness and sincerity. A weak man, however honest, is not qualified to judge. A man of the world, however penetrating, is not fit to counsel. Friends are often chosen for similitude of manners, and therefore each palliates the other's failings, because they are his own. Friends are tender, and unwilling to give pain, or they are interested, and fearful to offend.

These objections have inclined others to advise, that he who would know himself, should consult his enemies, remember the reproaches that are vented to his face, and listen for the censures that are uttered in private. For his great business is to know his faults, and those malignity will discover, and resentment will reveal. But this precept may be often frustrated; for it seldom happens that rivals or opponents are suffered to come near enough to know our conduct with so much exactness as that conscience should allow and reflect the accusation. The

charge of an enemy is often totally false, and commonly so mingled with falsehood, that the mind takes advantage from the failure of one part to discredit the rest, and never suffers any disturbance afterward from such partial reports.

Yet it seems that enemies have been always found by experience the most faithful monitors; for adversity has ever been considered as the state in which a man most easily becomes acquainted with himself, and this effect it must produce by withdrawing flatterers, whose business it is to hide our weaknesses from us, or by giving loose to malice, and licence to reproach; or at least by cutting off those pleasures which called us away from meditation on our own conduct, and repressing that pride which too easily persuades us that we merit whatever we enjoy.

Part of these benefits it is in every man's power to procure to himself, by assigning proper portions of his life to the examination of the rest, and by putting himself frequently in such a situation, by retirement and abstraction, as may weaken the influence of external objects. By this practice he may obtain the solitude of adversity without its melancholy, its instructions without its censures, and its sensibility without its perturbations.

The necessity of setting the world at a distance from us, when we are to take a survey of ourselves, has sent many from high stations to the severities of a monastic life; and, indeed, every man deeply engaged in business, if all regard to another state be not extinguished, must have the conviction, though, perhaps, not the resolution of Valdesso, who, when he solicited Charles the Fifth to dismiss him, being asked, whether he retired upon disgust, answered that he laid down his commission for no other reason but because *there ought to be some time for sober reflection between the life of a soldier and his death.*

There are few conditions which do not entangle us with sublunary hopes and fears, from which it is necessary to be at intervals disencumbered, that we may place ourselves in his presence who views effects in their causes, and actions in their motives; that we may, as Chilling-

worth expresses it, consider things as if there were no other beings in the world but God and ourselves; or, to use language yet more awful, *may commune with our own hearts, and be still.*

Death, says Seneca, falls heavy upon him who is too much known to others, and too little to himself; and Pontanus, a man celebrated among the early restorers of literature, thought the study of our own hearts of so much importance, that he has recommended it from his tomb. *Sum* Joannes Jovianus Pontanus, *quem amaverunt bonæ musæ, suspexerunt viri probi, honestaverunt reges domini; jam scis qui sim, vel qui potius fuerim; ego vero te, hospes, noscere in tenebris nequeo, sed teipsum ut noscas rogo.* "I am Pontanus, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou knowest now who I am, or more properly who I was. For thee, stranger, I who am in darkness cannot know thee, but I intreat thee to know thyself."

I hope every reader of this paper will consider himself as engaged to the observation of a precept, which the wisdom and virtue of all ages have concurred to enforce: a precept, dictated by philosophers, inculcated by poets, and ratified by saints.

N° 29. TUESDAY, *June* 26, 1750.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosâ nocte premit Deus,
Ridetque si mortalis ultra
Fas trepidet——HOR.

But God has wisely hid from human sight
The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown their seeds in depth of night;
He laughs at all the giddy turns of state,
When mortals search too soon, and fear too late.—DRYDEN.

THERE is nothing recommended with greater frequency among the gayer poets of antiquity, than the secure possession of the present hour, and the dismission of all the cares which intrude upon our quiet, or hinder, by impor-

tunate perturbations, the enjoyment of those delights which our condition happens to set before us.

The ancient poets are, indeed, by no means unexceptionable teachers of morality; their precepts are to be always considered as the sallies of a genius, intent rather upon giving pleasure than instruction, eager to take every advantage of insinuation, and, provided the passions can be engaged on its side, very little solicitous about the suffrage of reason.

The darkness and uncertainty through which the heathens were compelled to wander in the pursuit of happiness, may, indeed, be alleged as an excuse for many of their seducing invitations to immediate enjoyment, which the moderns, by whom they have been imitated, have not to plead. It is no wonder that such as had no promise of another state should eagerly turn their thoughts upon the improvement of that which was before them; but surely those who are acquainted with the hopes and fears of eternity, might think it necessary to put some restraint upon their imagination, and reflect that by echoing the songs of the ancient bacchanals, and transmitting the maxims of past debauchery, they not only prove that they want invention, but virtue, and submit to the servility of imitation only to copy that of which the writer, if he was to live now, would often be ashamed.

Yet as the errours and follies of a great genius are seldom without some radiations of understanding, by which meaner minds may be enlightened, the incitements to pleasure are, in those authors, generally mingled with such reflections upon life, as well deserve to be considered distinctly from the purposes for which they are produced, and to be treasured up as the settled conclusions of extensive observation, acute sagacity, and mature experience.

It is not without true judgment, that on these occasions they often warn their readers against inquiries into futurity, and solicitude about events which lie hid in causes yet unactive, and which time has not brought forward into the view of reason. An idle and thoughtless resig-

nation to chance, without any struggle against calamity, or endeavour after advantage, is indeed below the dignity of a reasonable being, in whose power Providence has put a great part even of his present happiness; but it shews an equal ignorance of our proper sphere, to harass our thoughts with conjectures about things not yet in being. How can we regulate events, of which we yet know not whether they will ever happen? And why should we think, with painful anxiety, about that on which our thoughts can have no influence?

It is a maxim commonly received, that a wise man is never surprized; and, perhaps, this exemption from astonishment may be imagined to proceed from such a prospect into futurity, as gave previous intimation of those evils which often fall unexpected upon others that have less foresight. But the truth is, that things to come, except when they approach very nearly, are equally hidden from men of all degrees of understanding; and if a wise man is not amazed at sudden occurrences, it is not that he has thought more, but less upon futurity. He never considered things not yet existing as the proper objects of his attention; he never indulged dreams till he was deceived by their phantoms, nor ever realized nonentities to his mind. He is not surprized, because he is not disappointed; and he escapes disappointment, because he never forms any expectations.

The concern about things to come, that is so justly censured, is not the result of those general reflections on the variableness of fortune, the uncertainty of life, and the universal insecurity of all human acquisitions, which must always be suggested by the view of the world; but such a desponding anticipation of misfortune, as fixes the mind upon scenes of gloom and melancholy, and makes fear predominate in every imagination.

Anxiety of this kind is nearly of the same nature with jealousy in love, and suspicion in the general commerce of life; a temper which keeps the man always in alarms; disposes him to judge of every thing in a manner that least

favours his own quiet, fills him with perpetual stratagems of counteraction, wears him out in schemes to obviate evils which never threatened him, and at length, perhaps, contributes to the production of those mischiefs of which it had raised such dreadful apprehensions.

It has been usual in all ages for moralists to repress the swellings of vain hope, by representations of the innumerable casualties to which life is subject, and by instances of the unexpected defeat of the wisest schemes of policy, and sudden subversions of the highest eminences of greatness. It has, perhaps, not been equally observed, that all these examples afford the proper antidote to fear as well as to hope, and may be applied with no less efficacy as consolations to the timorous, than as restraints to the proud.

Evil is uncertain in the same degree as good, and for the reason that we ought not to hope too securely, we ought not to fear with too much dejection. The state of the world is continually changing, and none can tell the result of the next vicissitude. Whatever is afloat in the stream of time, may, when it is very near us, be driven away by an accidental blast, which shall happen to cross the general course of the current. The sudden accidents by which the powerful are depressed, may fall upon those whose malice we fear; and the greatness by which we expect to be overborne, may become another proof of the false flatteries of fortune. Our enemies may become weak, or we grow strong before our encounter, or we may advance against each other without ever meeting. There are, indeed, natural evils which we can flatter ourselves with no hopes of escaping, and with little of delaying; but of the ills which are apprehended from human malignity, or the opposition of rival interests, we may always alleviate the terrour, by considering that our persecutors are weak and ignorant, and mortal like ourselves.

The misfortunes which arise from the concurrence of unhappy incidents should never be suffered to disturb us before they happen; because, if the breast be once laid open to the dread of mere possibilities of misery, life must

be given a prey to dismal solicitude, and quiet must be lost for ever.

It is remarked by old Cornaro, that it is absurd to be afraid of the natural dissolution of the body, because it must certainly happen, and can, by no caution or artifice, be avoided. Whether this sentiment be entirely just, I shall not examine; but certainly, if it be improper to fear events which must happen, it is yet more evidently contrary to right reason to fear those which may never happen, and which, if they should come upon us, we cannot resist.

As we ought not to give way to fear, any more than indulgence to hope, because the objects both of fear and hope are yet uncertain, so we ought not to trust the representations of one more than of the other, because they are both equally fallacious; as hope enlarges happiness, fear aggravates calamity. It is generally allowed, that no man ever found the happiness of possession proportionate to that expectation which incited his desire, and invigorated his pursuit; nor has any man found the evils of life so formidable in reality, as they were described to him by his own imagination: every species of distress brings with it some peculiar supports, some unforeseen means of resisting, or power of enduring. Taylor justly blames some pious persons, who indulge their fancies too much, set themselves, by the force of imagination, in the place of the ancient martyrs and confessors, and question the validity of their own faith, because they shrink at the thoughts of flames and tortures. It is, says he, sufficient that you are able to encounter the temptations which now assault you; when God sends trials, he may send strength.

All fear is in itself painful, and when it conduces not to safety is painful without use. Every consideration therefore, by which groundless terrours may be removed, adds something to human happiness. It is likewise not unworthy of remark, that in proportion as our cares are employed upon the future they are abstracted from the present, from the only time which we can call our own, and of which if we neglect the apparent duties, to make

provision against visionary attacks, we shall certainly counteract our own purpose; for he, doubtless, mistakes his true interest, who thinks that he can increase his safety, when he impairs his virtue.

N° 30. SATURDAY, *June* 30, 1750.

——— *Vultus ubi tuus*
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent.—HOR.

Whene'er thy countenance divine
Th' attendant people cheers,
The genial suns more radiant shine,
The day more glad appears.—ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

THERE are few tasks more ungrateful than for persons of modesty to speak their own praises. In some cases, however, this must be done for the general good, and a generous spirit will on such occasions assert its merit, and vindicate itself with becoming warmth.

My circumstances, Sir, are very hard and peculiar. Could the world be brought to treat me as I deserve, it would be a publick benefit. This makes me apply to you, that my case being fairly stated in a paper so generally esteemed, I may suffer no longer from ignorant and childish prejudices.

My elder brother was a Jew; a very respectable person, but somewhat austere in his manner: highly and deservedly valued by his near relations and intimates, but utterly unfit for mixing in a large society, or gaining a general acquaintance among mankind. In a venerable old age he retired from the world, and I in the bloom of youth came into it, succeeding him in all his dignities, and formed, as I might reasonably flatter myself, to be the object of universal love and esteem. Joy and gladness were born with me; cheerfulness, good-humour, and benevolence, always attended and endeared my infancy. That time is long past. So long, that idle imaginations are apt to fancy me

wrinkled, old, and disagreeable; but, unless my looking-glass deceives me, I have not yet lost one charm, one beauty of my earliest years. However, thus far is too certain, I am to every body just what they choose to think me, so that to very few I appear in my right shape; and though naturally I am the friend of human kind, to few, very few comparatively, am I useful or agreeable.

This is the more grievous, as it is utterly impossible for me to avoid being in all sorts of places and companies; and I am therefore liable to meet with perpetual affronts and injuries. Though I have as natural an antipathy to cards and dice, as some people have to a cat, many and many an assembly am I forced to endure; and though rest and composure are my peculiar joy, am worn out and harassed to death with journeys by men and women of quality, who never take one but when I can be of the party. Some, on a contrary extreme, will never receive me but in bed, where they spend at least half of the time I have to stay with them; and others are so monstrously ill-bred as to take physick on purpose when they have reason to expect me. Those who keep upon terms of more politeness with me, are generally so cold and constrained in their behaviour, that I cannot but perceive myself an unwelcome guest; and even among persons deserving of esteem, and who certainly have a value for me, it is too evident that generally whenever I come I throw a dulness over the whole company, that I am entertained with a formal stiff civility, and that they are glad when I am fairly gone.

How bitter must this kind of reception be to one formed to inspire delight, admiration, and love! To one capable of answering and rewarding the greatest warmth and delicacy of sentiments!

I was bred up among a set of excellent people, who affectionately loved me, and treated me with the utmost honour and respect. It would be tedious to relate the variety of my adventures, and strange vicissitudes of my fortune in many different countries. Here in England

there was a time when I lived according to my heart's desire. Whenever I appeared, public assemblies appointed for my reception were crowded with persons of quality and fashion, early drest as for a court, to pay me their devoirs. Cheerful hospitality every where crowned my board, and I was looked upon in every country parish as a kind of social bond between the 'squire, the parson, and the tenants. The laborious poor every where blest my appearance: they do so still, and keep their best clothes to do me honour; though as much as I delight in the honest country folks, they do now and then throw a pot of ale at my head, and sometimes an unlucky boy will drive his cricket-ball full in my face.

Even in these my best days there were persons who thought me too demure and grave. I must forsooth by all means be instructed by foreign masters, and taught to dance and play. This method of education was so contrary to my genius, formed for much nobler entertainments, that it did not succeed at all.

I fell next into the hands of a very different set. They were so excessively scandalized at the gaiety of my appearance, as not only to despoil me of the foreign fopperies, the paint and the patches that I had been tricked out with by my last misjudging tutors, but they robbed me of every innocent ornament I had from my infancy been used to gather in the fields and gardens; nay, they blacked my face, and covered me all over with a habit of mourning, and that, too, very coarse and awkward. I was now obliged to spend my whole life in hearing sermons; nor permitted so much as to smile upon any occasion.

In this melancholy disguise I became a perfect bugbear to all children, and young folks. Wherever I came there was a general hush, and immediate stop to all pleasantness of look or discourse; and not being permitted to talk with them in my own language at that time, they took such a disgust to me in those tedious hours of yawning, that having transmitted it to their children, I cannot now be heard, though it is long since I have recovered my natural

form, and pleasing tone of voice. Would they but receive my visits kindly, and listen to what I could tell them—let me say it without vanity—how charming a companion should I be! to every one could I talk on the subjects most interesting and most pleasing. With the great and ambitious, I would discourse of honours and advancements, of distinctions to which the whole world should be witness, of unenvied dignities and durable preferments. To the rich I would tell of inexhaustible treasures, and the sure method to attain them. I would teach them to put out their money on the best interest, and instruct the lovers of pleasure how to secure and improve it to the highest degree. The beauty should learn of me how to preserve an everlasting bloom. To the afflicted I would administer comfort, and rêlaxation to the busy.

As I dare promise myself you will attest the truth of all I have advanced, there is no doubt but many will be desirous of improving their acquaintance with me; and that I may not be thought too difficult, I will tell you, in short, how I wish to be received.

You must know, I equally hate lazy idleness and hurry. I would every where be welcomed at a tolerably early hour with decent good-humour and gratitude. I must be attended in the great halls, peculiarly appropriated to me, with respect; but I do not insist upon finery: propriety of appearance, and perfect neatness, is all I require. I must at dinner be treated with a temperate, but cheerful social meal; both the neighbours and the poor should be the better for me. Some time I must have *tête-à-tête* with my kind entertainers, and the rest of my visit should be spent in pleasant walks and airings among sets of agreeable people, in such discourse as I shall naturally dictate, or in reading some few selected out of those numberless books that are dedicated to me, and go by my name. A name that, alas! as the world stands at present, makes them oftener thrown aside than taken up. As these conversations and books should be both well chosen, to give some advice on that head may possibly furnish you with

a future paper, and any thing you shall offer on my behalf will be of great service to,

Good Mr. RAMBLER,

Your faithful Friend and Servant,

SUNDAY.*

N° 31. TUESDAY, *July* 3, 1750.

Non ego mendosos ausim defendere mores,
Falsaque pro vitiis arma tenere meis.—OVID.

Corrupted manners I shall ne'er defend;
Nor, falsely witty, for my faults contend.—ELPHINSTON.

THOUGH the fallibility of man's reason, and the narrowness of his knowledge, are very liberally confessed, yet the conduct of those who so willingly admit the weakness of human nature, seems to discover that this acknowledgment is not altogether sincere; at least, that most make it with a tacit reserve in favour of themselves, and that with whatever ease they give up the claim of their neighbours, they are desirous of being thought exempt from faults in their own conduct, and from errour in their opinions.

The certain and obstinate opposition, which we may observe made to confutation however clear, and to reproof however tender, is an undoubted argument, that some dormant privilege is thought to be attacked; for as no man can lose what he neither possesses, nor imagines himself to possess, or be defrauded of that to which he has no right, it is reasonable to suppose that those who break out into fury at the softest contradiction, or the slightest censure, since they apparently conclude themselves injured, must fancy some ancient immunity violated, or some natural prerogative invaded. To be mistaken, if they thought themselves liable to mistake, could not be considered either as shameful or wonderful, and they would not receive with so much emotion intelligence

* This paper was supplied by Miss Catherine Talbot, daughter of the Rev. Ed. Talbot, Archdeacon of Berks, and Preacher at the Rolls.

which only informed them of what they knew before, nor struggle with such earnestness against an attack that deprived them of nothing to which they held themselves entitled.

It is related of one of the philosophers, that when an account was brought him of his son's death, he received it only with this reflection, *I knew that my son was mortal.* He that is convinced of an errour, if he had the same knowledge of his own weakness, would, instead of straining for artifices, and brooding malignity, only regard such oversights as the appendages of humanity, and pacify himself with considering that he had always known man to be a fallible being.

If it be true that most of our passions are excited by the novelty of objects, there is little reason for doubting, that to be considered as subject to fallacies of ratiocination, or imperfection of knowledge, is to a great part of mankind entirely new; for it is impossible to fall into any company where there is not some regular and established subordination, without finding rage and vehemence produced only by difference of sentiments about things in which neither of the disputants have any other interest, than what proceeds from their mutual unwillingness to give way to any opinion that may bring upon them the disgrace of being wrong.

I have heard of one that, having advanced some erroneous doctrines in philosophy, refused to see the experiments by which they were confuted: and the observation of every day will give new proofs with how much industry subterfuges and evasions are sought to decline the pressure of resistless arguments, how often the state of the question is altered, how often the antagonist is wilfully misrepresented, and in how much perplexity the clearest positions are involved by those whom they happen to oppose.

Of all mortals none seem to have been more infected with this species of vanity, than the race of writers, whose reputation arising solely from their understanding, gives

them a very delicate sensibility of any violence attempted on their literary honour. It is not unpleasing to remark with what solicitude men of acknowledged abilities will endeavour to palliate absurdities and reconcile contradictions, only to obviate criticisms to which all human performances must ever be exposed, and from which they can never suffer, but when they teach the world, by a vain and ridiculous impatience, to think them of importance.

Dryden, whose warmth of fancy, and haste of composition, very frequently hurried him into inaccuracies, heard himself sometimes exposed to ridicule for having said in one of his tragedies,

I follow fate, which does too fast pursue.

That no man could at once follow and be followed was, it may be thought, too plain to be long disputed; and the truth is, that Dryden was apparently betrayed into the blunder by the double meaning of the word FATE, to which in the former part of the verse he had annexed the idea of FORTUNE, and in the latter that of DEATH; so that the sense only was, *though pursued by* DEATH, *I will not resign myself to despair, but will follow* FORTUNE, *and do and suffer what is appointed.* This, however, was not completely expressed, and Dryden being determined not to give way to his criticks, never confessed that he had been surprized by an ambiguity; but finding luckily in Virgil an account of a man moving in a circle, with this expression, *Et se sequiturque fugitque*, "Here," says he, "is the passage in imitation of which I wrote the line that my criticks were pleased to condemn as nonsense; not but I may sometimes write nonsense, though they have not the fortune to find it."

Every one sees the folly of such mean doublings to escape the pursuit of criticism; nor is there a single reader of this poet, who would not have paid him greater veneration, had he shewn consciousness enough of his own superiority to set such cavils at defiance, and owned

that he sometimes slipped into errours by the tumult of his imagination, and the multitude of his ideas.

It is happy when this temper discovers itself only in little things, which may be right or wrong without any influence on the virtue or happiness of mankind. We may, with very little inquietude, see a man persist in a project which he has found to be impracticable, live in an inconvenient house because it was contrived by himself, or wear a coat of a particular cut, in hopes by perseverance to bring it into fashion. These are indeed follies, but they are only follies, and, however wild or ridiculous, can very little affect others.

But such pride, once indulged, too frequently operates upon more important objects, and inclines men not only to vindicate their errours, but their vices; to persist in practices which their own hearts condemn, only lest they should seem to feel reproaches, or be made wiser by the advice of others; or to search for sophisms tending to the confusion of all principles, and the evacuation of all duties, that they may not appear to act what they are not able to defend.

Let every man, who finds vanity so far predominant, as to betray him to the danger of this last degree of corruption, pause a moment to consider what will be the consequences of the plea which he is about to offer for a practice to which he knows himself not led at first by reason, but impelled by the violence of desire, surprized by the suddenness of passion, or seduced by the soft approaches of temptation, and by imperceptible gradations of guilt. Let him consider what he is going to commit, by forcing his understanding to patronize those appetites, which it is its chief business to hinder and reform.

The cause of virtue requires so little art to defend it, and good and evil, when they have been once shewn, are so easily distinguished, that such apologists seldom gain proselytes to their party, nor have their fallacies power to deceive any but those whose desires have clouded their discernment. All that the best faculties thus employed

can perform is, to persuade the hearers that the man is hopeless whom they only thought vicious, that corruption has passed from his manners to his principles, that all endeavours for his recovery are without prospect of success, and that nothing remains but to avoid him as infectious, or hunt him down as destructive.

But if it be supposed that he may impose on his audience by partial representations of consequences, intricate deductions of remote causes, or perplexed combinations of ideas, which having various relations appear different as viewed on different sides; that he may sometimes puzzle the weak and well-meaning, and now and then seduce, by the admiration of his abilities, a young mind still fluctuating in unsettled notions, and neither fortified by instruction nor enlightened by experience; yet what must be the event of such a triumph! A man cannot spend all this life in frolick: age, or disease, or solitude, will bring some hours of serious consideration, and it will then afford no comfort to think, that he has extended the dominion of vice, that he has loaded himself with the crimes of others, and can never know the extent of his own wickedness, or make reparation for the mischief that he has caused. There is not, perhaps, in all the stores of ideal anguish, a thought more painful, than the consciousness of having propagated corruption by vitiating principles, of having not only drawn others from the paths of virtue, but blocked up the way by which they should return, of having blinded them to every beauty but the paint of pleasure, and deafened them to every call but the alluring voice of the syrens of destruction.

There is yet another danger in this practice: men who cannot deceive others, are very often successful in deceiving themselves; they weave their sophistry till their own reason is entangled, and repeat their positions till they are credited by themselves; by often contending, they grow sincere in the cause; and by long wishing for demonstrative arguments, they at last bring themselves to fancy that they have found them. They are then at

the uttermost verge of wickedness, and may die without having that light rekindled in their minds, which their own pride and contumacy have extinguished.

The men who can be charged with fewest failings, either with respect to abilities or virtue, are generally most ready to allow them; for, not to dwell on things of solemn and awful consideration, the humility of confessors, the tears of saints, and the dying terrours of persons eminent for piety and innocence, it is well known that Cæsar wrote an account of the errours committed by him in his wars of Gaul, and that Hippocrates, whose name is perhaps, in rational estimation, greater than Cæsar's, warned posterity against a mistake into which he had fallen. *So much*, says Celsus, *does the open and artless confession of an errour become a man conscious that he has enough remaining to support his character.*

As all errour is meanness, it is incumbent on every man who consults his own dignity, to retract it as soon as he discovers it, without fearing any censure so much as that of his own mind. As justice requires that all injuries should be repaired, it is the duty of him who has seduced others by bad practices or false notions, to endeavour that such as have adopted his errours should know his retraction, and that those who have learned vice by his example, should by his example be taught amendment.

N° 32. SATURDAY, *July* 7, 1750.

Ὁσσά τε δαιμονίῃσι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἄν μοῖραν ἔχῃς, πρᾴως φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει·
Ἰᾶσθαι δὲ πρέπει, κάθεσον δύνῃ.—PYTHAG.

Of all the woes that load the mortal state,
Whate'er thy portion, mildly meet thy fate;
But ease it as thou canst——ELPHINSTON.

So large a part of human life passes in a state contrary to our natural desires, that one of the principal topicks of moral instruction is the art of bearing calamities. And

such is the certainty of evil, that it is the duty of every man to furnish his mind with those principles that may enable him to act under it with decency and propriety.

The sect of ancient philosophers, that boasted to have carried this necessary science to the highest perfection, were the stoicks, or scholars of Zeno, whose wild enthusiastick virtue pretended to an exemption from the sensibilities of unenlightened mortals, and who proclaimed themselves exalted, by the doctrines of their sect, above the reach of those miseries which embitter life to the rest of the world. They therefore removed pain, poverty, loss of friends, exile, and violent death, from the catalogue of evils; and passed, in their haughty style, a kind of irreversible decree, by which they forbad them to be counted any longer among the objects of terrour or anxiety, or to give any disturbance to the tranquillity of a wise man.

This edict was, I think, not universally observed; for though one of the more resolute, when he was tortured by a violent disease, cried out, that let pain harass him to its utmost power, it should never force him to consider it as other than indifferent and neutral; yet all had not stubbornness to hold out against their senses: for a weaker pupil of Zeno is recorded to have confessed in the anguish of the gout, that *he now found pain to be an evil.*

It may however be questioned, whether these philosophers can be very properly numbered among the teachers of patience; for if pain be not an evil, there seems no instruction requisite how it may be borne; and therefore, when they endeavour to arm their followers with arguments against it, they may be thought to have given up their first position. But such inconsistencies are to be expected from the greatest understandings, when they endeavour to grow eminent by singularity, and employ their strength in establishing opinions opposite to nature.

The controversy about the reality of external evils is now at an end. That life has many miseries, and that those miseries are, sometimes at least, equal to all the powers of fortitude, is now universally confessed; and

therefore it is useful to consider not only how we may escape them, but by what means those which either the accidents of affairs, or the infirmities of nature, must bring upon us, may be mitigated and lightened, and how we may make those hours less wretched, which the condition of our present existence will not allow to be very happy.

The cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative. Infelicity is involved in corporeal nature, and interwoven with our being; all attempts therefore to decline it wholly are useless and vain: the armies of pain send their arrows against us on every side, the choice is only between those which are more or less sharp, or tinged with poison of greater or less malignity; and the strongest armour which reason can supply, will only blunt their points, but cannot repel them.

The great remedy which heaven has put in our hands is patience, by which, though we cannot lessen the torments of the body, we can in a great measure preserve the peace of the mind, and shall suffer only the natural and genuine force of an evil, without heightening its acrimony, or prolonging its effects.

There is indeed nothing more unsuitable to the nature of man in any calamity than rage and turbulence, which, without examining whether they are not sometimes impious, are at least always offensive, and incline others rather to hate and despise than to pity and assist us. If what we suffer has been brought upon us by ourselves, it is observed by an ancient poet, that patience is eminently our duty, since no one should be angry at feeling that which he has deserved.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est.

Let pain deserv'd without complaint be borne.

And surely, if we are conscious that we have not contributed to our own sufferings, if punishment falls upon innocence, or disappointment happens to industry and prudence, patience, whether more necessary or not, is much easier, since our pain is then without aggravation, and we

have not the bitterness of remorse to add to the asperity of misfortune.

In those evils which are allotted to us by Providence, such as deformity, privation of any of the senses, or old age, it is always to be remembered, that impatience can have no present effect, but to deprive us of the consolations which our condition admits, by driving away from us those by whose conversation or advice we might be amused or helped; and that with regard to futurity it is yet less to be justified, since, without lessening the pain, it cuts off the hope of that reward which he, by whom it is inflicted, will confer upon them that bear it well.

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience is to be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints, that, if properly applied, might remove the cause. Turenne, among the acknowledgments which he used to pay in conversation to the memory of those by whom he had been instructed in the art of war, mentioned one with honour, who taught him not to spend his time in regretting any mistake which he had made, but to set himself immediately and vigorously to repair it.

Patience and submission are very carefully to be distinguished from cowardice and indolence. We are not to repine, but we may lawfully struggle; for the calamities of life, like the necessities of nature, are calls to labour and exercises of diligence. When we feel any pressure of distress, we are not to conclude that we can only obey the will of heaven by languishing under it, any more than when we perceive the pain of thirst, we are to imagine that water is prohibited. Of misfortune it never can be certainly known whether, as proceeding from the hand of God, it is an act of favour or of punishment: but since all the ordinary dispensations of Providence are to be interpreted according to the general analogy of things, we may conclude that we have a right to remove one inconvenience as well as another; that we are only to take care lest we purchase ease with guilt; and that our Maker's purpose, whether of reward or severity, will be answered by the

labours which he lays us under the necessity of performing.

This duty is not more difficult in any state than in diseases intensely painful, which may indeed suffer such exacerbations as seem to strain the powers of life to their utmost stretch, and leave very little of the attention vacant to precept or reproof. In this state the nature of man requires some indulgence, and every extravagance but impiety may be easily forgiven him. Yet, lest we should think ourselves too soon entitled to the mournful privileges of irresistible misery, it is proper to reflect, that the utmost anguish which human wit can contrive, or human malice can inflict, has been borne with constancy; and that if the pains of disease be, as I believe they are, sometimes greater than those of artificial torture, they are therefore in their own nature shorter: the vital frame is quickly broken, or the union between soul and body is for a time suspended by insensibility and we soon cease to feel our maladies when they once become too violent to be borne. I think there is some reason for questioning whether the the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all that can be inflicted on the other, whether virtue cannot stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be separated sooner than subdued.

In calamities which operate chiefly on our passions, such as diminution of fortune, loss of friends, or declension of character, the chief danger of impatience is upon the first attack, and many expedients have been contrived, by which the blow may be broken. Of these the most general precept is, not to take pleasure in any thing, of which it is not in our power to secure the possession to ourselves. This counsel, when we consider the enjoyment of any terrestrial advantage, as opposite to a constant and habitual solicitude for future felicity, is undoubtedly just, and delivered by that authority which cannot be disputed; but in any other sense, is it not like advice, not to walk lest we should stumble, or not to see

lest our eyes should light upon deformity? It seems to me reasonable to enjoy blessings with confidence, as well as to resign them with submission, and to hope for the continuance of good which we possess without insolence or voluptuousness, as for the restitution of that which we lose without despondency or murmurs.

The chief security against the fruitless anguish of impatience, must arise from frequent reflection on the wisdom and goodness of the GOD of nature, in whose hands are riches and poverty, honour and disgrace, pleasure and pain, and life and death. A settled conviction of the tendency of every thing to our good, and of the possibility of turning miseries into happiness, by receiving them rightly, will incline us to *bless the name of the* LORD, *whether he gives or takes away.*

N° 33. TUESDAY, *July* 10, 1750.

Quod caret alternâ requie durabile non est.—OVID.

Alternate rest and labour long endure.

IN the early ages of the world, as is well known to those who are versed in ancient traditions, when innocence was yet untainted, and simplicity unadulterated, mankind was happy in the enjoyment of continual pleasure, and constant plenty, under the protection of REST; a gentle divinity, who required of her worshippers neither altars nor sacrifices, and whose rites were only performed by prostrations upon turfs of flowers in shades of jasmine and myrtle, or by dances on the banks of rivers flowing with milk and nectar.

Under this easy government the first generations breathed the fragrance of perpetual spring, ate the fruits, which, without culture, fell ripe into their hands, and slept under bowers arched by nature, with the birds singing over their heads, and the beasts sporting about them. But by degrees they began to lose their original integrity; each,

though there was more than enough for all, was desirous of appropriating part to himself. Then entered Violence and Fraud, and Theft and Rapine. Soon after Pride and Envy broke into the world, and brought with them a new standard of wealth; for men, who, till then thought themselves rich when they wanted nothing, now rated their demands, not by the calls of nature, but by the plenty of others: and began to consider themselves as poor, when they beheld their own possessions exceeded by those of their neighbours. Now only one could be happy, because only one could have most, and that one was always in danger, lest the same arts by which he had supplanted others should be practised upon himself.

Amidst the prevalence of this corruption, the state of the earth was changed; the year was divided into seasons; part of the ground became barren, and the rest yielded only berries, acorns, and herbs. The summer and autumn indeed furnished a coarse and inelegant sufficiency, but winter was without any relief: FAMINE, with a thousand diseases which the inclemency of the air invited into the upper regions, made havock among men, and there appeared to be danger lest they should be destroyed before they were reformed.

To oppose the devastations of FAMINE, who scattered the ground every where with carcases, LABOUR came down upon earth. LABOUR was the son of NECESSITY, the nurseling of HOPE, and the pupil of ART; he had the strength of his mother, the spirit of his nurse, and the dexterity of his governess. His face was wrinkled with the wind, and swarthy with the sun; he had the implements of husbandry in one hand, with which he turned up the earth; in the other he had the tools of architecture, and raised walls and towers at his pleasure. He called out with a rough voice, "Mortals! see here the power to whom you are consigned, and from whom you are to hope for all your pleasures, and all your safety. You have long languished under the dominion of REST, an impotent and deceitful goddess, who can neither protect nor relieve you,

but resigns you to the first attacks of either FAMINE or DISEASE, and suffers her shades to be invaded by every enemy, and destroyed by every accident.

"Awake therefore to the call of LABOUR. I will teach you to remedy the sterility of the earth, and the severity of the sky; I will compel summer to find provisions for the winter; I will force the waters to give you their fish, the air its fowls, and the forest its beasts; I will teach you to pierce the bowels of the earth, and bring out from the caverns of the mountains metals which shall give strength to your hands, and security to your bodies, by which you may be covered from the assaults of the fiercest beasts, and with which you shall fell the oak, and divide rocks, and subject all nature to your use and pleasure."

Encouraged by this magnificent invitation, the inhabitants of the globe considered LABOUR as their only friend, and hasted to his command. He led them out to the fields and mountains, and shewed them how to open mines, to level hills, to drain marshes, and change the course of rivers. The face of things was immediately transformed; the land was covered with towns and villages, encompassed with fields of corn, and plantations of fruit-trees; and nothing was seen but heaps of grain, and baskets of fruit, full tables, and crowded store-houses.

Thus LABOUR and his followers added every hour new acquisitions to their conquests, and saw FAMINE gradually dispossessed of his dominions; till at last, amidst their jollity and triumphs, they were depressed and amazed by the approach of LASSITUDE, who was known by her sunk eyes and dejected countenance. She came forward trembling and groaning: at every groan the hearts of all those that beheld her lost their courage, their nerves slackened, their hands shook, and the instruments of labour fell from their grasp.

Shocked with this horrid phantom, they reflected with regret on their easy compliance with the solicitations of LABOUR, and began to wish again for the golden hours which they remembered to have passed under the reign of

REST, whom they resolved again to visit, and to whom they intended to dedicate the remaining part of their lives. REST had not left the world; they quickly found her, and to atone for their former desertion, invited her to the enjoyment of those acquisitions which LABOUR had procured them.

REST therefore took leave of the groves and valleys, which she had hitherto inhabited, and entered into palaces, reposed herself in alcoves, and slumbered away the winter upon beds of down, and the summer in artificial grottoes with cascades playing before her. There was indeed always something wanting to complete her felicity, and she could never lull her returning fugitives to that serenity which they knew before their engagements with LABOUR: Nor was her dominion entirely without controul, for she was obliged to share it with LUXURY, though she always looked upon her as a false friend, by whom her influence was in reality destroyed, while it seemed to be promoted.

The two soft associates, however, reigned for some time without visible disagreement, till at last LUXURY betrayed her charge, and let in DISEASE to seize upon her worshippers. REST then flew away, and left the place to the usurpers: who employed all their arts to fortify themselves in their possession, and to strengthen the interest of each other.

REST had not always the same enemy: in some places she escaped the incursions of DISEASE; but had her residence invaded by a more slow and subtle intruder, for very frequently, when every thing was composed and quiet, when there was neither pain within, nor danger without, when every flower was in bloom, and every gale freighted with perfumes, SATIETY would enter with a languishing and repining look, and throw herself upon the couch placed and adorned for the accommodation of REST. No sooner was she seated than a general gloom spread itself on every side, the groves immediately lost their verdure, and their inhabitants desisted from their

melody, the breeze sunk in sighs, and the flowers contracted their leaves, and shut up their odours. Nothing was seen on every side but multitudes wandering about they knew not whither, in quest they knew not of what; no voice was heard but of complaints that mentioned no pain, and murmurs that could tell of no misfortune.

Rest had now lost her authority. Her followers again began to treat her with contempt; some of them united themselves more closely to Luxury, who promised by her arts to drive Satiety away; and others, that were more wise, or had more fortitude, went back again to Labour, by whom they were indeed protected from Satiety, but delivered up in time to Lassitude, and forced by her to the bowers of Rest.

Thus Rest and Labour equally perceived their reign of short duration and uncertain tenure, and their empire liable to inroads from those who were alike enemies to both. They each found their subjects unfaithful, and ready to desert them upon every opportunity. Labour saw the riches which he had given always carried away as an offering to Rest, and Rest found her votaries in every exigence flying from her to beg help of Labour. They, therefore, at last determined upon an interview, in which they agreed to divide the world between them, and govern it alternately, allotting the dominion of the day to one, and that of the night to the other, and promised to guard the frontiers of each other, so that, whenever hostilities were attempted, Satiety should be intercepted by Labour, and Lassitude expelled by Rest. Thus the ancient quarrel was appeased, and as hatred is often succeeded by its contrary, Rest afterwards became pregnant by Labour, and was delivered of Health, a benevolent goddess, who consolidated the union of her parents, and contributed to the regular vicissitudes of their reign, by dispensing her gifts to those only who shared their lives in just proportions between Rest and Labour.

N° 34. SATURDAY, *July* 14, 1750.

—— *Non sine vano*
Aurarum et silvæ metu.——HOR.

Alarm'd with ev'ry rising gale,
In ev'ry wood, in ev'ry vale.—ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been censured for having hitherto dedicated so few of my speculations to the ladies; and indeed the moralist, whose instructions are accommodated only to one half of the human species, must be confessed not sufficiently to have extended his views. Yet it is to be considered, that masculine duties afford more room for counsels and observations, as they are less uniform, and connected with things more subject to vicissitude and accident; we therefore find that in philosophical discourses which teach by precept, or historical narratives that instruct by example, the peculiar virtues or faults of women fill but a small part; perhaps generally too small, for so much of our domestick happiness is in their hands, and their influence is so great upon our earliest years, that the universal interest of the world requires them to be well instructed in their province; nor can it be thought proper that the qualities by which so much pain or pleasure may be given, should be left to the direction of chance.

I have, therefore, willingly given a place in my paper to a letter, which perhaps may not be wholly useless to them whose chief ambition is to please, as it shews how certainly the end is missed by absurd and injudicious endeavours at distinction.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM a young gentleman at my own disposal, with a considerable estate; and having passed through the common forms of education, spent some time in foreign countries, and made myself distinguished since my return in

the politest company, I am now arrived at that part of life in which every man is expected to settle, and provide for the continuation of his lineage. I withstood for some time the solicitations and remonstrances of my aunts and uncles, but at last was persuaded to visit Anthea, an heiress, whose land lies contiguous to mine, and whose birth and beauty are without objection. Our friends declared that we were born for each other; all those on both sides who had no interest in hindering our union, contributed to promote it, and were conspiring to hurry us into matrimony, before we had an opportunity of knowing one another. I was, however, too old to be given away without my own consent; and having happened to pick up an opinion, which to many of my relations seemed extremely odd, that a man might be unhappy with a large estate, determined to obtain a nearer knowledge of the person with whom I was to pass the remainder of my time. To protract the courtship was by no means difficult, for Anthea had a wonderful facility of evading questions which I seldom repeated, and of barring approaches which I had no great eagerness to press.

Thus the time passed away in visits and civilities without any ardent professions of love, or formal offers of settlements. I often attended her to publick places, in which, as is well known, all behaviour is so much regulated by custom, that very little insight can be gained into the private character, and therefore I was not yet able to inform myself of her humour and inclinations.

At last I ventured to propose to her to make one of a small party, and spend a day in viewing a seat and gardens a few miles distant; and having, upon her compliance, collected the rest of the company, I brought, at the hour, a coach which I had borrowed from an acquaintance, having delayed to buy one myself, till I should have an opportunity of taking the lady's opinion for whose use it was intended. Anthea came down, but as she was going to step into the coach, started back with great appearance of terrour, and told us that she durst not enter, for the

shocking colour of the lining had so much the air of the mourning coach in which she followed her aunt's funeral three years before, that she should never have her poor dear aunt out of her head.

I knew that it was not for lovers to argue with their mistresses; I therefore sent back the coach and got another more gay. Into this we all entered, the coachman began to drive, and we were amusing ourselves with the expectation of what we should see, when, upon a small inclination of the carriage, Anthea screamed out, that we were overthrown. We were obliged to fix all our attention upon her, which she took care to keep up by renewing her outcries at every corner where we had occasion to turn; at intervals she entertained us with fretful complaints of the uneasiness of the coach, and obliged me to call several times on the coachman to take care and drive without jolting. The poor fellow endeavoured to please us, and therefore moved very slowly, till Anthea found out that this pace would only keep us longer on the stones, and desired that I would order him to make more speed. He whipped his horses, the coach jolted again, and Anthea very complaisantly told us how much she repented that she made one of our company.

At last we got into the smooth road, and began to think our difficulties at an end, when, on a sudden Anthea saw a brook before us, which she could not venture to pass. We were, therefore, obliged to alight, that we might walk over the bridge; but when we came to it we found it so narrow, that Anthea durst not set her foot upon it, and was content, after long consultation, to call the coach back, and with innumerable precautions, terrours, and lamentations, crossed the brook.

It was necessary after this delay to amend our pace, and directions were accordingly given to the coachman, when Anthea informed us, that it was common for the axle to catch fire with a quick motion, and begged of me to look out every minute, lest we should all be consumed. I was forced to obey, and give her from time to time the

most solemn declarations that all was safe, and that I hoped we should reach the place without losing our lives either by fire or water.

Thus we passed on, over ways soft and hard, with more or less speed, but always with new vicissitudes of anxiety. If the ground was hard, we were jolted; if soft, we were sinking. If we went fast, we should be overturned; if slowly, we should never reach the place. At length she saw something which she called a cloud, and began to consider that at that time of the year it frequently thundered. This seemed to be the capital terrour, for after that the coach was suffered to move on; and no danger was thought too dreadful to be encountered, provided she could get into a house before the thunder.

Thus our whole conversation passed in dangers, and cares, and fears, and consolations, and stories of ladies dragged in the mire, forced to spend all the night on a heath, drowned in rivers, or burnt with lightning; and no sooner had a hairbreadth escape set us free from one calamity, but we were threatened with another.

At length we reached the house where we intended to regale ourselves, and I proposed to Anthea the choice of a great number of dishes, which the place, being well provided for entertainment, happened to afford. She made some objection to every thing that was offered; one thing she hated at that time of the year; another she could not bear since she had seen it spoiled at lady Feedwell's table, another she was sure they could not dress at this house, and another she could not touch without French sauce. At last she fixed her mind upon salmon, but there was no salmon in the house. It was however procured with great expedition, and when it came to the table she found that her fright had taken away her stomach, which indeed she thought no great loss, for she could never believe that any thing at an inn could be cleanly got.

Dinner was now over, and the company proposed, for I was now past the condition of making overtures, that we should pursue our original design of visiting the gar-

dens. Anthea declared that she could not imagine what pleasure we expected from the sight of a few green trees and a little gravel, and two or three pits of clear water: that for her part she hated walking till the cool of the evening, and thought it very likely to rain; and again wished that she had staid at home. We then reconciled ourselves to our disappointment, and began to talk on common subjects, when Anthea told us, that since we came to see gardens, she would not hinder our satisfaction. We all rose, and walked through the enclosures for some time, with no other trouble than the necessity of watching lest a frog should hop across the way, which Anthea told us would certainly kill her if she should happen to see him.

Frogs, as it fell out, there were none; but when we were within a furlong of the gardens, Anthea saw some sheep, and heard the wether clink his bell, which she was certain was not hung upon him for nothing, and therefore no assurances nor intreaties should prevail upon her to go a step further; she was sorry to disappoint the company, but her life was dearer to her than ceremony.

We came back to the inn, and Anthea now discovered that there was no time to be lost in returning, for the night would come upon us, and a thousand misfortunes might happen in the dark. The horses were immediately harnessed, and Anthea having wondered what could seduce her to stay so long, was eager to set out. But we had now a new scene of terrour, every man we saw was a robber, and we were ordered sometimes to drive hard, lest a traveller whom we saw behind should overtake us; and sometimes to stop, lest we should come up to him who was passing before us. She alarmed many an honest man, by begging him to spare her life as he passed by the coach, and drew me into fifteen quarrels with persons who increased her fright, by kindly stopping to inquire whether they could assist us. At last we came home, and she told her company next day what a pleasant ride she had been taking.

I suppose, Sir, I need not inquire of you what deductions may be made from this narrative, nor what happiness can arise from the society of that woman who mistakes cowardice for elegance, and imagines all delicacy to consist in refusing to be pleased.

I am, &c.

N° 35. TUESDAY, *July* 17, 1750.

——— *Non pronuba Juno,*
Non Hymenæus adest, non illi Gratia lecto.—OVID.

Without connubial Juno's aid they wed;
Nor Hymen nor the Graces bless the bed.—ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have hitherto delayed the performance of the promise, by which you gave us reason to hope for another paper upon matrimony, I imagine you desirous of collecting more materials than your own experience, or observation, can supply; and I shall therefore lay candidly before you an account of my own entrance into the conjugal state.

I was about eight-and-twenty years old, when, having tried the diversions of the town till I began to be weary, and being awakened into attention to more serious business by the failure of an attorney to whom I had implicitly trusted the conduct of my fortune, I resolved to take my estate into my own care, and methodize my whole life according to the strictest rules of economical prudence.

In pursuance of this scheme, I took leave of my acquaintance, who dismissed me with numberless jests upon my new system; having first endeavoured to divert me from a design so little worthy of a man of wit, by ridiculous accounts of the ignorance and rusticity into which many had sunk in their retirement, after having distinguished themselves in taverns and playhouses, and given hopes of rising to uncommon eminence among the gay part of mankind.

When I came first into the country, which, by a neglect not uncommon among young heirs, I had never seen since the death of my father, I found every thing in such confusion, that being utterly without practice in business, I had great difficulties to encounter in disentangling the perplexities of my circumstances; they however gave way to diligent application; and I perceived that the advantage of keeping my own accounts would very much overbalance the time which they could require.

I had now visited my tenants, surveyed my land, and repaired the old house, which, for some years, had been running to decay. These proofs of pecuniary wisdom began to recommend me as a sober, judicious, thriving gentleman, to all my graver neighbours of the country, who never failed to celebrate my management in opposition to Thriftless and Latterwit, two smart fellows, who had estates in the same part of the kingdom, which they visited now and then in a frolick, to take up their rents before-hand, debauch a milk-maid, make a feast for the village, and tell stories of their own intrigues, and then rode post back to town to spend their money.

It was doubtful, however, for some time, whether I should be able to hold my resolution; but a short perseverance removed all suspicions. I rose every day in reputation, by the decency of my conversation, and the regularity of my conduct, and was mentioned with great regard at the assizes, as a man very fit to be put in commission for the peace.

During the confusion of my affairs, and the daily necessity of visiting farms, adjusting contracts, letting leases, and superintending repairs, I found very little vacuity in my life, and therefore had not many thoughts of marriage; but, in a little while, the tumult of business subsided, and the exact method which I had established enabled me to dispatch my accounts with great facility. I had, therefore, now upon my hands, the task of finding means to spend my time, without falling back into the poor amusements which I had hitherto indulged, or changing

them for the sports of the field, which I saw pursued with so much eagerness by the gentlemen of the country, that they were indeed the only pleasures in which I could promise myself any partaker.

The inconvenience of this situation naturally disposed me to wish for a companion, and the known value of my estate, with my reputation for frugality and prudence, easily gained me admission into every family; for I soon found that no inquiry was made after any other virtue, nor any testimonial necessary, but of my freedom from incumbrances, and my care of what they termed the *main chance*. I saw, not without indignation, the eagerness with which the daughters, wherever I came, were set out to show; nor could I consider them in a state much different from prostitution, when I found them ordered to play their airs before me, and to exhibit, by some seeming chance, specimens of their musick, their work, or their housewifery. No sooner was I placed at table, than the young lady was called upon to pay me some civility or other; nor could I find means of escaping, from either father or mother, some account of their daughter's excellencies, with a declaration that they were now leaving the world, and had no business on this side the grave, but to see their children happily disposed of; that she whom I had been pleased to compliment at table was indeed the chief pleasure of their age, so good, so dutiful, so great a relief to her mamma in the care of the house, and so much her papa's favourite for her cheerfulness and wit, that it would be with the last reluctance that they should part; but to a worthy gentleman in the neighbourhood, whom they might often visit, they would not so far consult their own gratification, as to refuse her; and their tenderness should be shewn in her fortune, whenever a suitable settlement was proposed.

As I knew these overtures not to proceed from any preference of me before another equally rich, I could not but look with pity on young persons condemned to be set to auction, and made cheap by injudicious commendations;

for how could they know themselves offered and rejected a hundred times, without some loss of that soft elevation, and maiden dignity, so necessary to the completion of female excellence?

I shall not trouble you with a history of the stratagems practised upon my judgment, or the allurements tried upon my heart, which, if you have, in any part of your life, been acquainted with rural politicks, you will easily conceive. Their arts have no great variety, they think nothing worth their care but money, and supposing its influence the same upon all the world, seldom endeavour to deceive by any other means than false computations.

I will not deny that, by hearing myself loudly commended for my discretion, I began to set some value upon my character, and was unwilling to lose my credit by marrying for love. I therefore resolved to know the fortune of the lady whom I should address, before I inquired after her wit, delicacy, or beauty.

This determination led me to Mitissa, the daughter of Chrysophilus, whose person was at least without deformity, and whose manners were free from reproach, as she had been bred up at a distance from all common temptations. To Mitissa, therefore, I obtained leave from her parents to pay my court, and was referred by her again to her father, whose direction she was resolved to follow. The question then was, only, what should be settled? The old gentleman made an enormous demand, with which I refused to comply. Mitissa was ordered to exert her power; she told me, that if I could refuse her papa, I had no love for her; that she was an unhappy creature, and that I was a perfidious man; then she burst into tears, and fell into fits. All this, as I was no passionate lover, had little effect. She next refused to see me, and because I thought myself obliged to write in terms of distress, they had once hopes of starving me into measures; but finding me inflexible, the father complied with my proposal, and told me he liked me the more for being so good at a bargain.

I was now married to Mitissa, and was to experience the happiness of a match made without passion. Mitissa soon discovered that she was equally prudent with myself, and had taken a husband only to be at her own command, and to have a chariot at her own call. She brought with her an old maid recommended by her mother, who taught her all the arts of domestick management, and was, on every occasion, her chief agent and directress. They soon invented one reason or other, to quarrel with all my servants, and either prevailed on me to turn them away, or treated them so ill that they left me of themselves, and always supplied their places with some brought from my wife's relations. Thus they established a family, over which I had no authority, and which was in a perpetual conspiracy against me; for Mitissa considered herself as having a separate interest, and thought nothing her own, but what she laid up without my knowledge. For this reason she brought me false accounts of the expences of the house, joined with my tenants in complaints of hard times, and by means of a steward of her own, took rewards for soliciting abatements of the rent. Her great hope is to outlive me, that she may enjoy what she has thus accumulated, and therefore she is always contriving some improvements of her jointure land, and once tried to procure an injunction to hinder me from felling timber upon it for repairs. Her father and mother assist her in her projects, and are frequently hinting that she is ill used, and reproaching me with the presents that other ladies receive from their husbands.

Such, Sir, was my situation for seven years, till at last my patience was exhausted, and having one day invited her father to my house, I laid the state of my affairs before him, detected my wife in several of her frauds, turned out her steward, charged a constable with her maid, took my business in my own hands, reduced her to a settled allowance, and now write this account to warn others against marrying those whom they have no reason to esteem.

I am, &c.

N° 36. SATURDAY, *July* 21, 1750.

Ἅμ' ἕποντο νομῆες
Τερπόμενοι σύριγξι, δόλον δ' οὔτι προνόησαν.—HOMER.

——— Piping on their reeds the shepherds go,
Nor fear an ambush, nor suspect a foe.—POPE.

THERE is scarcely any species of poetry that has allured more readers, or excited more writers, than the pastoral. It is generally pleasing, because it entertains the mind with representations of scenes familiar to almost every imagination, and of which all can equally judge whether they are well described. It exhibits a life, to which we have been always accustomed to associate peace, and leisure, and innocence: and therefore we readily set open the heart for the admission of its images, which contribute to drive away cares and perturbations, and suffer ourselves, without resistance, to be transported to elysian regions, where we are to meet with nothing but joy, and plenty, and contentment; where every gale whispers pleasure, and every shade promises repose.

It has been maintained by some, who love to talk of what they do not know, that pastoral is the most ancient poetry; and, indeed, since it is probable that poetry is nearly of the same antiquity with rational nature, and since the life of the first men was certainly rural, we may reasonably conjecture, that, as their ideas would necessarily be borrowed from those objects with which they are acquainted, their composures, being filled chiefly with such thoughts on the visible creation as must occur to the first observers, were pastoral hymns, like those which Milton introduces the original pair singing, in the day of innocence, to the praise of their Maker.

For the same reason that pastoral poetry was the first employment of the human imagination, it is generally the first literary amusement of our minds. We have seen fields, and meadows, and groves, from the time that our eyes opened upon life; and are pleased with birds, and

brooks, and breezes, much earlier than we engage among the actions and passions of mankind. We are therefore delighted with rural pictures, because we know the original at an age when our curiosity can be very little awakened by descriptions of courts which we never beheld, or representations of passions which we never felt.

The satisfaction received from this kind of writing not only begins early, but lasts long; we do not, as we advance into the intellectual world, throw it away among other childish amusements and pastimes, but willingly return to it in any hour of indolence and relaxation. The images of true pastoral have always the power of exciting delight, because the works of nature, from which they are drawn, have always the same order and beauty, and continue to force themselves upon our thoughts, being at once obvious to the most careless regard, and more than adequate to the strongest reason, and severest contemplation. Our inclination to stillness and tranquillity is seldom much lessened by long knowledge of the busy and tumultuary part of the world. In childhood we turn our thoughts to the country, as to the region of pleasure; we recur to it in old age as a port of rest, and perhaps with that secondary and adventitious gladness, which every man feels on reviewing those places, or recollecting those occurrences, that contributed to his youthful enjoyments, and bring him back to the prime of life, when the world was gay with the bloom of novelty, when mirth wantoned at his side, and hope sparkled before him.

The sense of this universal pleasure has invited *numbers without number* to try their skill in pastoral performances, in which they have generally succeeded after the manner of other imitators, transmitting the same images in the same combination from one to another, till he that reads the title of a poem, may guess at the whole series of the composition; nor will a man, after the perusal of thousands of these performances, find his know-

ledge enlarged with a single view of nature not produced before, or his imagination amused with any new application of those views to moral purposes.

The range of pastoral is indeed narrow; for though nature itself, philosophically considered, be inexhaustible, yet its general effects on the eye and on the ear are uniform, and incapable of much variety of description. Poetry cannot dwell upon the minuter distinctions, by which one species differs from another, without departing from that simplicity of grandeur which fills the imagination; nor dissect the latent qualities of things, without losing its general power of gratifying every mind by recalling its conceptions. However, as each age makes some discoveries, and those discoveries are by degrees generally known, as new plants or modes of culture are introduced, and by little and little become common, pastoral might receive, from time to time, small augmentations, and exhibit once in a century a scene somewhat varied.

But pastoral subjects have been often, like others, taken into the hands of those that were not qualified to adorn them, men to whom the face of nature was so little known, that they have drawn it only after their own imagination, and changed or distorted her features, that their portraits might appear something more than servile copies from their predecessors.

Not only the images of rural life, but the occasions on which they can be properly produced, are few and general. The state of a man confined to the employments and pleasures of the country, is so little diversified, and exposed to so few of those accidents which produce perplexities, terrours, and surprizes, in more complicated transactions, that he can be shewn but seldom in such circumstances as attract curiosity. His ambition is without policy, and his love without intrigue. He has no complaints to make of his rival, but that he is richer than himself; nor any disasters to lament, but a cruel mistress, or a bad harvest.

The conviction of the necessity of some new source of pleasure induced Sannazarius to remove the scene from the fields to the sea, to substitute fishermen for shepherds, and derive his sentiments from the piscatory life; for which he has been censured by succeeding criticks, because the sea is an object of terrour, and by no means proper to amuse the mind, and lay the passions asleep. Against this objection he might be defended by the established maxim, that the poet has a right to select his images, and is no more obliged to shew the sea in a storm, than the land under an inundation; but may display all the pleasures, and conceal the dangers of the water, as he may lay his shepherd under a shady beech, without giving him an ague, or letting a wild beast loose upon him.

There are, however, two defects in the piscatory eclogue, which perhaps cannot be supplied. The sea, though in hot countries it is considered by those who live, like Sannazarius, upon the coast, as a place of pleasure and diversion, has notwithstanding much less variety than the land, and therefore will be sooner exhausted by a descriptive writer. When he has once shewn the sun rising or setting upon it, curled its waters with the vernal breeze, rolled the waves in gentle succession to the shore, and enumerated the fish sporting in the shallows, he has nothing remaining but what is common to all other poetry, the complaint of a nymph for a drowned lover, or the indignation of a fisher that his oysters are refused, and Mycon's accepted.

Another obstacle to the general reception of this kind of poetry, is the ignorance of maritime pleasures, in which the greater part of mankind must always live. To all the inland inhabitants of every region, the sea is only known as an immense diffusion of waters, over which men pass from one country to another, and in which life is frequently lost. They have, therefore, no opportunity of tracing in their own thoughts, the descriptions of winding shores and calm bays, nor can look on the poem in which they are

mentioned, with other sensations than on a sea chart, or the metrical geography of Dionysius.

This defect Sannazarius was hindered from perceiving, by writing in a learned language to readers generally acquainted with the works of nature; but if he had made his attempt in any vulgar tongue, he would soon have discovered how vainly he had endeavoured to make that loved, which was not understood.

I am afraid it will not be found easy to improve the pastorals of antiquity, by any great additions or diversifications. Our descriptions may indeed differ from those of Virgil, as an English from an Italian summer, and, in some respects, as modern from ancient life; but as nature is in both countries nearly the same, and as poetry has to do rather with the passions of men, which are uniform, than their customs, which are changeable, the varieties, which time or place can furnish, will be inconsiderable; and I shall endeavour to shew, in the next paper, how little the latter ages have contributed to the improvement of the rustick muse.

N° 37. TUESDAY, *July* 24, 1750.

Canto quæ solitus, si quando armenta vocabat,
Amphion Dircæus.——VIRG.

Such strains I sing as once Amphion play'd
When list'ning flocks the powerful call obey'd.—ELPHINSTON.

IN writing or judging of pastoral poetry, neither the authors nor criticks of latter times seem to have paid sufficient regard to the originals left us by antiquity, but have entangled themselves with unnecessary difficulties, by advancing principles, which, having no foundation in the nature of things, are wholly to be rejected from a species of composition, in which, above all others, mere nature is to be regarded.

It is therefore necessary to inquire after some more distinct and exact idea of this kind of writing. This may, I think, be easily found in the pastorals of Virgil, from

whose opinion it will not appear very safe to depart, if we consider that every advantage of nature, and of fortune, concurred to complete his productions; that he was born with great accuracy and severity of judgment, enlightened with all the learning of one of the brightest ages, and embellished with the elegance of the Roman court; that he employed his powers rather in improving, than inventing, and therefore must have endeavoured to recompence the want of novelty by exactness; that taking Theocritus for his original, he found pastoral far advanced towards perfection, and that having so great a rival, he must have proceeded with uncommon caution.

If we search the writings of Virgil for the true definition of a pastoral, it would be found *a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon a country life.* Whatsoever therefore may, according to the common course of things, happen in the country, may afford a subject for a pastoral poet.

In this definition, it will immediately occur to those who are versed in the writings of the modern criticks, that there is no mention of the golden age. I cannot indeed easily discover why it is thought necessary to refer descriptions of a rural state to remote times, nor can I perceive that any writer has consistently preserved the Arcadian manners and sentiments. The only reason, that I have read, on which this rule has been founded, is, that, according to the customs of modern life, it is improbable that shepherds should be capable of harmonious numbers, or delicate sentiments; and therefore the reader must exalt his ideas of the pastoral character, by carrying his thoughts back to the age in which the care of herds and flocks was the employment of the wisest and greatest men.

These reasoners seem to have been led into their hypothesis, by considering pastoral, not in general as a representation of rural nature, and consequently as exhibiting the ideas and sentiments of those, whoever they are, to whom the country affords pleasure or employment, but simply as a dialogue, or narrative of men actually

tending sheep, and busied in the lowest and most laborious offices; from whence they very readily concluded, since characters must necessarily be preserved, that either the sentiments must sink to the level of the speakers, or the speakers must be raised to the height of the sentiments.

In consequence of these original errours, a thousand precepts have been given, which have only contributed to perplex and confound. Some have thought it necessary that the imaginary manners of the golden age should be universally preserved, and have therefore believed, that nothing more could be admitted in pastoral, than lilies and roses, and rocks and streams, among which are heard the gentle whispers of chaste fondness, or the soft complaints of amorous impatience. In pastoral, as in other writings, chastity of sentiment ought doubtless to be observed, and purity of manners to be represented; not because the poet is confined to the images of the golden age, but because, having the subject in his own choice, he ought always to consult the interest of virtue.

These advocates for the golden age lay down other principles, not very consistent with their general plan; for they tell us, that, to support the character of the shepherd, it is proper that all refinement should be avoided, and that some slight instances of ignorance should be interspersed. Thus the shepherd in Virgil is supposed to have forgot the name of Anaximander, and in Pope the term zodiack is too hard for a rustick apprehension. But if we place our shepherds in their primitive condition, we may give them learning among their other qualifications; and if we suffer them to allude at all to things of later existence, which, perhaps, cannot with any great propriety be allowed, there can be no danger of making them speak with too much accuracy, since they conversed with divinities, and transmitted to succeeding ages the arts of life.

Other writers, having the mean and despicable condition of a shepherd always before them, conceive it necessary to degrade the language of pastoral by obsolete terms and rustick words, which they very learnedly call Dorick,

without reflecting that they thus became authors of a mangled dialect, which no human being ever could have spoken, that they may as well refine the speech as the sentiments of their personages, and that none of the inconsistencies which they endeavour to avoid, is greater than that of joining elegance of thought with coarseness of diction. Spenser begins one of his pastorals with studied barbarity:

> Diggon Davie, I bid her good-day:
> Or, Diggon her is, or I missay.
> *Dig.* Her was her while it was day-light,
> But now her is a most wretched wight.

What will the reader imagine to be the subject on which speakers like these exercise their eloquence? Will he not be somewhat disappointed, when he finds them met together to condemn the corruptions of the church of Rome? Surely, at the same time that a shepherd learns theology, he may gain some acquaintance with his native language.

Pastoral admits of all ranks of persons, because persons of all ranks inhabit the country. It excludes not, therefore, on account of the characters necessary to be introduced, any elevation or delicacy of sentiment; those ideas only are improper, which, not owing their original to rural objects, are not pastoral. Such is the exclamation in Virgil,

> *Nunc scio quid sit Amor, duris in cautibus illum*
> *Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,*
> *Nec generis nostri puerum, nec sanguinis, edunt.*
>
> I know thee, Love, in deserts thou wert bred,
> And at the dugs of savage tygers fed;
> Alien of birth, usurper of the plains.—DRYDEN.

Which Pope endeavouring to copy, was carried to still greater impropriety:

> I know thee, Love, wild as the raging main,
> More fierce than tygers on the Libyan plain;
> Thou wert from Ætna's burning entrails torn;
> Begot in tempests and in thunders born!

Sentiments like these, as they have no ground in nature,

are indeed of little value in any poem; but in pastoral they are particularly liable to censure, because, it wants that exaltation above common life, which in tragick or heroick writings often reconciles us to bold flights and daring figures.

Pastoral being the *representation of an action or passion, by its effects upon a country life*, has nothing peculiar but its confinement to rural imagery, without which it ceases to be pastoral. This is its true characteristick, and this it cannot lose by any dignity of sentiment, or beauty of diction. The Pollio of Virgil, with all its elevation, is a composition truly bucolick, though rejected by the criticks; for all the images are either taken from the country, or from the religion of the age common to all parts of the empire.

The Silenus is indeed of a more disputable kind, because, though the scene lies in the country, the song being religious and historical, had been no less adapted to any other audience or place. Neither can it well be defended as a fiction; for the introduction of a god seems to imply the golden age, and yet he alludes to many subsequent transactions, and mentions Gallus, the poet's contemporary.

It seems necessary to the perfection of this poem, that the occasion which is supposed to produce it, be at least not inconsistent with a country life, or less likely to interest those who have retired into places of solitude and quiet, than the more busy part of mankind. It is therefore improper to give the title of a pastoral to verses, in which the speakers, after the slight mention of their flocks, fall to complaints of errours in the church, and corruptions in the government, or to lamentations of the death of some illustrious person, whom, when once the poet has called a shepherd, he has no longer any labour upon his hands, but can make the clouds weep and lilies wither, and the sheep hang their heads, without art or learning, genius or study.

It is part of Claudian's character of his rustick, that he

computes his time not by the succession of consuls, but of harvest. Those who pass their days in retreats distant from the theatres of business, are always least likely to to hurry their imagination with publick affairs.

The facility of treating actions or events in the pastoral style, has incited many writers, from whom more judgment might have been expected, to put the sorrow or the joy which the occasion required into the mouth of Daphne or of Thyrsis; and as one absurdity must naturally be expected to make way for another, they have written with an utter disregard both of life and nature, and filled their productions with mythological allusions, with incredible fictions, and with sentiments which neither passion nor reason could have dictated, since the change which religion has made in the whole system of the world.

N° 38. SATURDAY, *July* 28, 1750.

Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
Sordibus tecti, caret invidendâ
Sobrius aulâ.—HOR.

The man within the golden mean
Who can his boldest wish contain,
Securely views the ruin'd cell,
Where sordid want and sorrow dwell;
And in himself serenely great,
Declines an envied room of state.—FRANCIS.

AMONG many parallels which men of imagination have drawn between the natural and moral state of the world, it has been observed that happiness as well as virtue, consists in mediocrity; that to avoid every extreme is necessary, even to him who has no other care than to pass through the present state with ease and safety; and that the middle path is the road of security, on either side of which are not only the pitfalls of vice, but the precipices of ruin.

Thus the maxim of Cleobulus the Lindian, μέτρον ἄριστον, *Mediocrity is best*, has been long considered as an

universal principle, extended through the whole compass of life and nature. The experience of every age seems to have given it new confirmation, and to shew that nothing, however specious or alluring, is pursued with propriety, or enjoyed with safety, beyond certain limits.

Even the gifts of nature, which may truly be considered as the most solid and durable of all terrestrial advantages, are found, when they exceed the middle point, to draw the possessor into many calamities, easily avoided by others that have been less bountifully enriched or adorned. We see every day women perish with infamy, by having been too willing to set their beauty to shew; and others, though not with equal guilt or misery, yet with very sharp remorse, languishing in decay, neglect, and obscurity, for having rated their youthful charms at too high a price. And, indeed, if the opinion of Bacon be thought to deserve much regard, very few sighs would be vented for eminent and superlative elegance of form; "for beautiful women," says he, "are seldom of any great accomplishments, because they, for the most part, study behaviour rather than virtue."

Health and vigour, and a happy constitution of the corporeal frame, are of absolute necessity to the enjoyment of the comforts, and to the performance of the duties of life, and requisite in yet a greater measure to the accomplishment of any thing illustrious or distinguished; yet even these, if we can judge by their apparent consequences, are sometimes not very beneficial to those on whom they are most liberally bestowed. They that frequent the chambers of the sick will generally find the sharpest pains, and most stubborn maladies, among them whom confidence of the force of nature formerly betrayed to negligence and irregularity; and that superfluity of strength, which was at once their boast and their snare, has often, in the latter part of life, no other effect than that it continues them long in impotence and anguish.

These gifts of nature are, however, always blessings in themselves, and to be acknowledged with gratitude to

him that gives them; since they are, in their regular and legitimate effects, productive of happiness, and prove pernicious only by voluntary corruption or idle negligence. And as there is little danger of pursuing them with too much ardour or anxiety, because no skill or diligence can hope to procure them, the uncertainty of their influence upon our lives is mentioned, not to depreciate their real value, but to repress the discontent and envy to which the want of them often gives occasion in those who do not enough suspect their own frailty, nor consider how much less is the calamity of not possessing great powers, than of not using them aright.

Of all those things that make us superior to others, there is none so much within the reach of our endeavours as riches, nor any thing more eagerly or constantly desired. Poverty is an evil always in our view, an evil complicated with so many circumstances of uneasiness and vexation, that every man is studious to avoid it. Some degree of riches is therefore required, that we may be exempt from the gripe of necessity; when this purpose is once attained, we naturally wish for more, that the evil which is regarded with so much horrour, may be yet at a greater distance from us; as he that has once felt or dreaded the paw of a savage, will not be at rest till they are parted by some barrier, which may take away all possibility of a second attack.

To this point, if fear be not unreasonably indulged, Cleobulus would, perhaps, not refuse to extend his mediocrity. But it almost always happens, that the man who grows rich, changes his notions of poverty, states his wants by some new measure, and from flying the enemy that pursued him, bends his endeavours to overtake those whom he sees before him. The power of gratifying his appetites increases their demands; a thousand wishes crowd in upon him, importunate to be satisfied, and vanity and ambition open prospects to desire, which still grow wider, as they are more contemplated.

Thus in time want is enlarged without bounds; an

eagerness for increase of possessions deluges the soul, and we sink into the gulphs of insatiability, only because we do not sufficiently consider, that all real need is very soon supplied, and all real danger of its invasion easily precluded; that the claims of vanity, being without limits, must be denied at last; and that the pain of repressing them is less pungent before they have been long accustomed to compliance.

Whosoever shall look heedfully upon those who are eminent for their riches, will not think their condition such as that he should hazard his quiet, and much less his virtue, to obtain it. For all that great wealth generally gives above a moderate fortune, is more room for the freaks of caprice, and more privilege for ignorance and vice, a quicker succession of flatteries, and a larger circle of voluptuousness.

There is one reason seldom remarked which makes riches less desirable. Too much wealth is very frequently the occasion of poverty. He whom the wantonness of abundance has once softened, easily sinks into neglect of his affairs; and he that thinks he can afford to be negligent, is not far from being poor. He will soon be involved in perplexities, which his inexperience will render unsurmountable; he will fly for help to those whose interest it is that he should be more distressed, and will be at last torn to pieces by the vultures that always hover over fortunes in decay.

When the plains of India were burnt up by a long continuance of drought, Hamet and Raschid, two neighbouring shepherds, faint with thirst, stood at the common boundary of their grounds, with their flocks and herds panting round them, and in extremity of distress prayed for water. On a sudden the air was becalmed, the birds ceased to chirp, and the flocks to bleat. They turned their eyes every way, and saw a being of mighty stature advancing through the valley, whom they knew upon his nearer approach to be the Genius of Distribution. In one hand he held the sheaves of plenty, and in the other the

sabre of destruction. The shepherds stood trembling, and would have retired before him; but he called to them with a voice gentle as the breeze that plays in the evening among the spices of Sabæa; "Fly not from your benefactor, children of the dust! I am come to offer you gifts, which only your own folly can make vain. You here pray for water, and water I will bestow; let me know with how much you will be satisfied: speak not rashly; consider, that of whatever can be enjoyed by the body, excess is no less dangerous than scarcity. When you remember the pain of thirst, do not forget the danger of suffocation. Now, Hamet, tell me your request."

"O Being, kind and beneficent," says Hamet, "let thine eye pardon my confusion. I entreat a little brook, which in summer shall never be dry, and in winter never overflow." "It is granted," replies the Genius; and immediately he opened the ground with his sabre, and a fountain bubbling up under their feet, scattered its rills over the meadows; the flowers renewed their fragrance, the trees spread a greener foliage, and the flocks and herds quenched their thirst.

Then turning to Raschid, the Genius invited him likewise to offer his petition. "I request," says Raschid, "that thou wilt turn the Ganges through my grounds, with all his waters, and all their inhabitants." Hamet was struck with the greatness of his neighbour's sentiments, and secretly repined in his heart, that he had not made the same petition before him; when the Genius spoke, "Rash man, be not insatiable! remember, to thee that is nothing which thou canst not use; and how are thy wants greater than the wants of Hamet?" Raschid repeated his desire, and pleased himself with the mean appearance that Hamet would make in the presence of the proprietor of the Ganges. The Genius then retired towards the river, and the two shepherds stood waiting the event. As Raschid was looking with contempt upon his neighbour, on a sudden was heard the roar of torrents, and they found by the mighty stream that the mounds of the

Ganges were broken. The flood rolled forward into the lands of Raschid, his plantations were torn up, his flocks overwhelmed, he was swept away before it, and a crocodile devoured him.

N° 39. TUESDAY, *July* 31, 1750.

Infelix——nulli bene nupta marito.—AUSONIUS.

Unblest, still doom'd to wed with misery.

THE condition of the female sex has been frequently the subject of compassion to medical writers, because their constitution of body is such, that every state of life brings its peculiar diseases: they are placed, according to the proverb, between Scylla and Charybdis, with no other choice than of dangers equally formidable; and whether they embrace marriage, or determine upon a single life, are exposed, in consequence of their choice, to sickness, misery, and death.

It were to be wished that so great a degree of natural infelicity might not be increased by adventitious and artificial miseries; and that beings, whose beauty we cannot behold without admiration, and whose delicacy we cannot contemplate without tenderness, might be suffered to enjoy every alleviation of their sorrows. But, however it has happened, the custom of the world seems to have been formed in a kind of conspiracy against them, though it does not appear but they had themselves an equal share in its establishment; and prescriptions which, by whomsoever they were begun, are now of long continuance, and by consequence of great authority, seem to have almost excluded them from content, in whatsoever condition they shall pass their lives.

If they refuse the society of men, and continue in that state which is reasonably supposed to place happiness most in their own power, they seldom give those that fre-

quent their conversation any exalted notions of the blessing of liberty; for whether it be that they are angry to see with what inconsiderate eagerness other heedless females rush into slavery, or with what absurd vanity the married ladies boast the change of their condition, and condemn the heroines who endeavour to assert the natural dignity of their sex; whether they are conscious that like barren countries they are free, only because they were never thought to deserve the trouble of a conquest, or imagine that their sincerity is not always unsuspected, when they declare their contempt of men; it is certain, that they generally appear to have some great and incessant cause of uneasiness, and that many of them have at last been persuaded, by powerful rhetoricians, to try the life which they had so long contemned, and put on the bridal ornaments at a time when they least became them.

What are the real causes of the impatience which the ladies discover in a virgin state, I shall perhaps take some other occasion to examine. That it is not to be envied for its happiness, appears from the solicitude with which it is avoided; from the opinion universally prevalent among the sex, that no woman continues long in it but because she is not invited to forsake it; from the disposition always shewn to treat old maids as the refuse of the world; and from the willingness with which it is often quitted at last, by those whose experience has enabled them to judge at leisure, and decide with authority.

Yet such is life, that whatever is proposed, it is much easier to find reasons for rejecting than embracing. Marriage, though a certain security from the reproach and solicitude of antiquated virginity, has yet, as it is usually conducted, many disadvantages, that take away much from the pleasure which society promises, and might afford, if pleasures and pains were honestly shared, and mutual confidence inviolably preserved.

The miseries, indeed, which many ladies suffer under conjugal vexations, are to be considered with great pity, because their husbands are often not taken by them as

objects of affection, but forced upon them by authority and violence, or by persuasion and importunity, equally resistless when urged by those whom they have been always accustomed to reverence and obey; and it very seldom appears that those who are thus despotick in the disposal of their children, pay any regard to their domestick and personal felicity, or think it so much to be inquired whether they will be happy, as whether they will be rich.

It may be urged, in extenuation of this crime, which parents, not in any other respect to be numbered with robbers and assassins, frequently commit, that, in their estimation, riches and happiness are equivalent terms. They have passed their lives with no other wish than of adding acre to acre, and filling one bag after another, and imagine the advantage of a daughter sufficiently considered, when they have secured her a large jointure, and given her reasonable expectations of living in the midst of those pleasures with which she had seen her father and mother solacing their age.

There is an œconomical oracle received among the prudential part of the world, which advises fathers *to marry their daughters, lest they should marry themselves;* by which I suppose it is implied, that women left to their own conduct generally unite themselves with such partners as can contribute very little to their felicity. Who was the author of this maxim, or with what intention it was originally uttered, I have not yet discovered; but imagine, that however solemnly it may be transmitted, or however implicitly received, it can confer no authority which nature has denied; it cannot licence Titius to be unjust, lest Caia should be imprudent; nor give right to imprison for life, lest liberty should be ill employed.

That the ladies have sometimes incurred imputations which might naturally produce edicts not much in their favour, must be confessed by their warmest advocates; and I have indeed seldom observed that when the tenderness or virtue of their parents has preserved them from forced marriage, and left them at large to choose their own

path in the labyrinth of life, they have made any great advantage of their liberty. They commonly take the opportunity of independence to trifle away youth, and lose their bloom in a hurry of diversions, recurring in a succession too quick to leave room for any settled reflection: they see the world without gaining experience, and at last regulate their choice by motives trifling as those of a girl, or mercenary as those of a miser.

Melanthia came to town upon the death of her father, with a very large fortune, and with the reputation of a much larger; she was therefore followed and caressed by many men of rank, and by some of understanding; but having an insatiable desire of pleasure, she was not at leisure, from the park, the gardens, the theatres, visits, assemblies, and masquerades, to attend seriously to any proposal, but was still impatient for a new flatterer, and neglected marriage as always in her power; till in time her admirers fell away, wearied with expence, disgusted at her folly, or offended by her inconstancy; she heard of concerts to which she was not invited, and was more than once forced to sit still at an assembly for want of a partner. In this distress, chance threw in her way Philotryphus, a man vain, glittering, and thoughtless as herself, who had spent a small fortune in equipage and dress, and was shining in the last suit for which his tailor would give him credit. He had been long endeavouring to retrieve his extravagance by marriage, and therefore soo paid his court to Melanthia, who after some weeks of in sensibility saw him at a ball, and was wholly overcom by his performance in a minuet. They married; but man cannot always dance, and Philotryphus had no oth method of pleasing; however, as neither was in any gre degree vicious, they live together with no other unhap ness, than vacuity of mind, and that tastelessness of l which proceeds from a satiety of juvenile pleasures, an utter inability to fill their place by nobler employm As they have known the fashionable world at the time, they agree in their notions of all those subjec

which they ever speak, and being able to add nothing to the ideas of each other, are not much inclined to conversation, but very often join in one wish, "That they could sleep more, and think less."

Argyris, after having refused a thousand offers, at last consented to marry Cotylus, the younger brother of a duke, a man without elegance of mien, beauty of person, or force of understanding; who, while he courted her, could not always forbear allusions to her birth, and hints how cheaply she would purchase an alliance to so illustrious a family. His conduct from the hour of his marriage has been insufferably tyrannical, nor has he any other regard to her than what arises from his desire that her appearance may not disgrace him. Upon this principle, however, he always orders that she should be gaily dressed, and splendidly attended; and she has, among all her mortifications, the happiness to take place of her eldest sister.

N° 40. SATURDAY, *August* 4, 1750.

——— *Nec dicet, cur ego amicum*
Offendam in nugis? Hæ nugæ seria ducent
In mala derisum semel.—HOR.

Nor say, for trifles why should I displease
The man I love? For trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love,
If once the flatterer's ridicule he prove.—FRANCIS.

IT has been remarked, that authors are *genus irritabile, eneration very easily put out of temper*, and that they sel- m fail of giving proofs of their irascibility upon the ghtest attack of criticism, or the most gentle or modest r of advice and information.

Writers being best acquainted with one another, have esented this character as prevailing among men of li- ure, which a more extensive view of the world would shewn them to be diffused through all human nature ngle itself with every species of ambition and desire ise, and to discover its effects with greater or less

t, and under disguises more or less artful, in all and all conditions.

quarrels of writers, indeed, are more observed, be- they necessarily appeal to the decision of the pub- Their enmities are incited by applauses from their ies, and prolonged by treacherous encouragement for neral diversion; and when the contest happens to rise gh between men of genius and learning, its memory is ntinued for the same reason as its vehemence was at rst promoted, because it gratifies the malevolence or cu- riosity of readers, and relieves the vacancies of life with amusement and laughter. The personal disputes, there- fore, of rivals in wit are sometimes transmitted to poste- rity, when the grudges and heart-burnings of men less con- spicuous, though carried on with equal bitterness, and productive of greater evils, are exposed to the knowledge of those only whom they nearly affect, and suffered to pass off and be forgotten among common and casual transac- tions.

The resentment which the discovery of a fault or folly produces, must bear a certain proportion to our pride, and will regularly be more acrimonious as pride is more im- mediately the principle of action. In whatever therefore we wish to imagine ourselves to excel, we shall always be displeased to have our claims to reputation disputed; and more displeased if the accomplishment be such as can ex- pect reputation only for its reward. For this reason it is common to find men break out into rage at any insinua- tions to the disadvantage of their wit, who have borne with great patience reflections on their morals; and of women it has been always known, that no censure wounds so deeply, or rankles so long, as that which charges them with want of beauty.

As men frequently fill their imaginations with trifling pursuits, and please themselves most with things of small importance, I have often known very severe and lasting malevolence excited by unlucky censures, which would have fallen without any effect, had they not happened to

wound a part remarkably tender. Gustulus, who himself upon the nicety of his palate, disinherit eldest son for telling him that the wine, which he wa commending, was the same which he had sent awa day before not fit to be drunk. Proculus withdrew kindness from a nephew, whom he had always conside as the most promising genius of the age, for happening praise in his presence the graceful horsemanship Marius. And Fortunio, when he was privy counsello procured a clerk to be dismissed from one of the publicl offices, in which he was eminent for his skill and assiduity, because he had been heard to say that there was another man in the kingdom on whose skill at billiards he would lay his money against Fortunio's.

Felicia and Floretta had been bred up in one house, and shared all the pleasures and endearments of infancy together. They entered upon life at the same time, and continued their confidence and friendship; consulted each other in every change of their dress, and every admission of a new lover; thought every diversion more entertaining whenever it happened that both were present, and, when separated, justified the conduct, and celebrated the excellencies, of one another. Such was their intimacy, and such their fidelity; till a birth-night approached, when Floretta took one morning an opportunity, as they were consulting upon new clothes, to advise her friend not to dance at the ball, and informed her that her performance the year before had not answered the expectation which her other accomplishments had raised. Felicia commended her sincerity, and thanked her for the caution; but told her that she danced to please herself, and was in very little concern what the men might take the liberty of saying, but that if her appearance gave her dear Floretta any uneasiness, she would stay away. Floretta had now nothing left but to make new protestations of sincerity and affection, with which Felicia was so well satisfied, that they parted with more than usual fondness. They still continued to visit, with this only difference, that Felicia was more punctual

than before, and often declared how high a value she put upon sincerity, how much she thought that goodness to be esteemed which would venture to admonish a friend of an errour, and with what gratitude advice was to be received, even when it might happen to proceed from mistake.

In a few months Felicia, with great seriousness, told Floretta, that though her beauty was such as gave charms to whatever she did, and her qualifications so extensive, that she could not fail of excellence in any attempt, yet she thought herself obliged by the duties of friendship to inform her, that if ever she betrayed want of judgment, it was by too frequent compliance with solicitations to sing, for that her manner was somewhat ungraceful, and her voice had no great compass. It is true, says Floretta, when I sung three nights ago at lady Sprightly's, I was hoarse with a cold; but I sing for my own satisfaction, and am not in the least pain whether I am liked. However, my dear Felicia's kindness is not the less, and I shall always think myself happy in so true a friend.

From this time they never saw each other without mutual professions of esteem, and declarations of confidence, but went soon after into the country to visit their relations. When they came back, they were prevailed on, by the importunity of new acquaintance, to take lodgings in different parts of the town, and had frequent occasion, when they met, to bewail the distance at which they were placed, and the uncertainty which each experienced of finding the other at home.

Thus are the fondest and firmest friendships dissolved, by such openness and sincerity as interrupt our enjoyment of our own approbation, or recal us to the remembrance of those failings which we are more willing to indulge than to correct.

It is by no means necessary to imagine, that he who is offended at advice, was ignorant of the fault, and resents the admonition as a false charge; for perhaps it is most natural to be enraged, when there is the strongest conviction of our own guilt. While we can easily defend our

character, we are no more disturbed at an accusation, than we are alarmed by an enemy whom we are sure to conquer; and whose attack, therefore, will bring us honour without danger. But when a man feels the reprehension of a friend seconded by his own heart, he is easily heated into resentment and revenge, either because he hoped that the fault of which he was conscious had escaped the notice of others; or that his friend had looked upon it with tenderness and extenuation, and excused it for the sake of his other virtues; or had considered him as too wise to need advice, or too delicate to be shocked with reproach; or, because we cannot feel without pain those reflections roused which we have been endeavouring to lay asleep; and when pain has produced anger, who would not willingly believe, that it ought to be discharged on others, rather than on himself?

The resentment produced by sincerity, whatever be its immediate cause, is so certain, and generally so keen, that very few have magnanimity sufficient for the practice of a duty, which, above most others, exposes its votaries to hardships and persecutions; yet friendship without it is of very little value, since the great use of so close an intimacy is, that our virtues may be guarded and encouraged, and our vices repressed in their first appearance by timely detection and salutary remonstrances.

It is decreed by Providence, that nothing truly valuable shall be obtained in our present state, but with difficulty and danger. He that hopes for that advantage which is to be gained from unrestrained communication, must sometimes hazard, by unpleasing truths, that friendship which he aspires to merit. The chief rule to be observed in the exercise of this dangerous office, is to preserve it pure from all mixture of interest or vanity; to forbear admonition or reproof, when our consciences tell us that they are incited, not by the hopes of reforming faults, but the desire of shewing our discernment, or gratifying our own pride by the mortification of another. It is not indeed certain, that the most refined caution will find a proper time for

bringing a man to the knowledge of his own failings, or the most zealous benevolence reconcile him to that judgment, by which they are detected; but he who endeavours only the happiness of him whom he reproves, will always have either the satisfaction of obtaining or deserving kindness; if he succeeds, he benefits his friend, and if he fails, he has at least the consciousness that he suffers for only doing well.

N° 41. TUESDAY, *August* 7, 1750.

Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisque,
Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.
Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est
Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui.—MART.

No day's remembrance shall the good regret,
Nor wish one bitter moment to forget:
They stretch the limits of this narrow span;
And, by enjoying, live past life again.—F. LEWIS.

So few of the hours of life are filled up with objects adequate to the mind of man, and so frequently are we in want of present pleasure or employment, that we are forced to have recourse every moment to the past and future for supplemental satisfactions, and relieve the vacuities of our being, by recollection of former passages, or anticipation of events to come.

I cannot but consider this necessity of searching on every side for matter on which the attention may be employed, as a strong proof of the superiour and celestial nature of the soul of man. We have no reason to believe that other creatures have higher faculties, or more extensive capacities, than the preservation of themselves, or their species, requires: they seem always to be fully employed, or to be completely at ease without employment, to feel few intellectual miseries or pleasures, and to have no exuberance of understanding to lay out upon curiosity or caprice, but to have their minds exactly adapted to their bodies, with few other ideas than such as corporal pain or pleasure impress upon them.

Of memory, which makes so large a part of the excellence of the human soul, and which has so much influence upon all its other powers, but a small portion has been allotted to the animal world. We do not find the grief with which the dams lament the loss of their young, proportionate to the tenderness with which they caress, the assiduity with which they feed, or the vehemence with which they defend them. Their regard for their offspring, when it is before their eyes, is not, in appearance, less than that of a human parent; but when it is taken away, it is very soon forgotten, and after a short absence, if brought again, wholly disregarded.

That they have very little remembrance of any thing once out of the reach of their senses, and scarce any power of comparing the present with the past, and regulating their conclusions from experience, may be gathered from this, that their intellects are produced in their full perfection. The sparrow that was hatched last spring makes her first nest the ensuing season, of the same materials, and with the same art, as in any following year; and the hen conducts and shelters her first brood of chickens with all the prudence that she ever attains.

It has been asked by men who love to perplex any thing that is plain to common understandings, how reason differs from instinct; and Prior has with no great propriety made Solomon himself declare, that to distinguish them is *the fool's ignorance, and the pedant's pride.* To give an accurate answer to a question, of which the terms are not completely understood, is impossible; we do not know in what either reason or instinct consist, and therefore cannot tell with exactness how they differ; but surely he that contemplates a ship and a bird's nest, will not be long without finding out, that the idea of the one was impressed at once, and continued through all the progressive descents of the species, without variation or improvement; and that the other is the result of experiments, compared with experiments, has grown, by accumulated observation, from less to greater excellence, and exhibits

the collective knowledge of different ages and various professions.

Memory is the purveyor of reason, the power which places those images before the mind upon which the judgment is to be exercised, and which treasures up the determinations that are once passed, as the rules of future action, or grounds of subsequent conclusions.

It is, indeed, the faculty of remembrance, which may be said to place us in the glass of moral agents. If we were to act only in consequence of some immediate impulse, and receive no direction from internal motives of choice, we should be pushed forward by an invincible fatality, without power or reason for the most part to prefer one thing to another, because we could make no comparison but of objects which might both happen to be present.

We owe to memory not only the increase of our knowledge, and our progress in rational inquiries, but many other intellectual pleasures. Indeed, almost all that we can be said to enjoy is past or future; the present is in perpetual motion, leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived, and is only known to have existed by the effects which it leaves behind. The greatest part of our ideas arises, therefore, from the view before or behind us, and we are happy or miserable, according as we are affected by the survey of our life, or our prospect of future existence.

With regard to futurity, when events are at such a distance from us that we cannot take the whole concatenation into our view, we have generally power enough over our imagination to turn it upon pleasing scenes, and can promise ourselves riches, honours, and delights, without intermingling those vexations and anxieties, with which all human enjoyments are polluted. If fear breaks in on one side, and alarms us with dangers and disappointments, we can call in hope on the other, to solace us with rewards, and escapes, and victories; so that we are seldom without means of palliating remote evils, and can gene-

rally sooth ourselves to tranquillity, whenever any troublesome presage happens to attack us.

It is, therefore, I believe, much more common for the solitary and thoughtful to amuse themselves with schemes of the future, than reviews of the past. For the future is pliant and ductile, and will be easily moulded by a strong fancy into any form. But the images which memory presents are of a stubborn and untractable nature, the objects of remembrance have already existed, and left their signature behind them impressed upon the mind, so as to defy all attempts of rasure or of change.

As the satisfactions, therefore, arising from memory are less arbitrary, they are more solid, and, are indeed, the only joys which we can call our own. Whatever we have once reposited, as Dryden expresses it, *in the sacred treasure of the past*, is out of the reach of accident, or violence, nor can be lost either by our own weakness, or another's malice:

——— Non tamen irritum
Quodcunque retro est efficiet, neque
Diffinget, infectumque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.

Be fair or foul, or rain or shine,
The joys I have possess'd in spite of fate are mine.
Not Heav'n itself upon the past has pow'r
But what has been has been, and I have had my hour.—DRYDEN.

There is certainly no greater happiness than to be able to look back on a life usefully and virtuously employed, to trace our own progress in existence, by such tokens to excite neither shame nor sorrow. Life, in which nothing has been done or suffered to distinguish one day from another, is to him that has passed it, as if it had never been, except that he is conscious how ill he has husbanded the great deposit of his Creator. Life, made memorable by crimes, and diversified through its several periods by wickedness, is indeed easily reviewed, but reviewed only with horrour and remorse.

The great consideration which ought to influence us in the use of the present moment, is to arise from the effect,

which, as well or ill applied, it must have upon the time to come; for though its actual existence be inconceivably short, yet its effects are unlimited; and there is not the smallest point of time but may extend its consequences, either to our hurt or our advantage, through all eternity, and give us reason to remember it for ever, with anguish or exultation.

The time of life in which memory seems particularly to claim predominance over the other faculties of the mind, is our declining age. It has been remarked by former writers, that old men are generally narrative, and fall easily into recitals of past transactions, and accounts of persons known to them in their youth. When we approach the verge of the grave it is more eminently true:

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years.—CREECH.

We have no longer any possibility of great vicissitudes in our favour; the changes which are to happen in the world will come too late for our accommodation; and those who have no hope before them, and to whom their present state is painful and irksome, must of necessity turn their thoughts back to try what retrospect will afford. It ought, therefore, to be the care of those who wish to pass the last hours with comfort, to lay up such a treasure of pleasing ideas, as shall support the expences of that time, which is to depend wholly upon the fund already acquired.

——— *Petite hinc, juvenesque senesque*
Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica curis.

Seek here, ye young, the anchor of your mind;
Here, suff'ring age, a bless'd provision find.—ELPHINSTON.

In youth, however unhappy, we solace ourselves with the hope of better fortune, and however vicious, appease our consciences with intentions of repentance; but the time comes at last, in which life has no more to promise, in which happiness can be drawn only from recollection, and virtue will be all that we can recollect with pleasure.

N° 42. SATURDAY, *August* 11, 1750.

Mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora.—HOR.
How heavily my time revolves along.—ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

I AM no great admirer of grave writings, and therefore very frequently lay your papers aside before I have read them through; yet I cannot but confess that, by slow degrees, you have raised my opinion of your understanding, and that, though I believe it will be long before I can be prevailed upon to regard you with much kindness, you have, however, more of my esteem than those whom I sometimes make happy with opportunities to fill my tea-pot, or pick up my fan. I shall therefore choose you for the confidant of my distresses, and ask your counsel with regard to the means of conquering or escaping them, though I never expect from you any of that softness and pliancy, which constitutes the perfection of a companion for the ladies: as, in the place where I now am, I have recourse to the mastiff, for protection, though I have no intention of making him a lapdog.

My mamma is a very fine lady, who has more numerous and more frequent assemblies at her house than any other person in the same quarter of the town. I was bred from my earliest infancy in a perpetual tumult of pleasure, and remember to have heard of little else than messages, visits, playhouses, and balls; of the awkwardness of one woman, and the coquetry of another; the charming convenience of some rising fashion, the difficulty of playing a new game, the incidents of a masquerade, and the dresses of a court-night. I knew before I was ten years old all the rules of paying and receiving visits, and to how much civility every one of my acquaintance was entitled; and was able to return, with the proper degree of reserve or of vivacity, the stated and established answer to every compliment; so that I was very soon celebrated as a wit

and a beauty, and had heard before I was thirteen all that is ever said to a young lady. My mother was generous to so uncommon a degree as to be pleased with my advance into life, and allowed me, without envy or reproof, to enjoy the same happiness with herself; though most women about her own age were very angry to see young girls so forward, and many fine gentlemen told her how cruel it was to throw new chains upon mankind, and to tyrannize over them at the same time with her own charms, and those of her daughter.

I have now lived two-and-twenty years, and have passed of each year nine months in town, and three at Richmond; so that my time has been spent uniformly in the same company, and the same amusements, except as fashion has introduced new diversions, or the revolutions of the gay world have afforded new successions of wits and beaux. However, my mother is so good an œconomist of pleasure, that I have no spare hours upon my hands; for every morning brings some new appointment, and every night is hurried away by the necessity of making our appearance at different places, and of being with one lady at the opera, and with another at the card-table.

When the time came of settling our scheme of felicity for the summer, it was determined that I should pay a visit to a rich aunt in a remote county. As you know the chief conversation of all tea-tables, in the spring, arises from a communication of the manner in which time is to be passed till winter, it was a great relief to the barrenness of our topicks, to relate the pleasures that were in store for me, to describe my uncle's seat, with the park and gardens, the charming walks and beautiful water-falls; and every one told me how much she envied me, and what satisfaction she had once enjoyed in a situation of the same kind.

As we are all credulous in our own favour, and willing to imagine some latent satisfaction in any thing which we have not experienced, I will confess to you, without restraint, that I had suffered my head to be filled with ex-

pectations of some nameless pleasure in a rural life, and that I hoped for the happy hour that should set me free from noise, and flutter, and ceremony, dismiss me to the peaceful shade, and lull me in content and tranquillity. To solace myself under the misery of delay, I sometimes heard a studious lady of my acquaintance read pastorals, I was delighted with scarce any talk but of leaving the town, and never went to bed without dreaming of groves, and meadows, and frisking lambs.

At length I had all my clothes in a trunk, and saw the coach at the door; I sprung in with ecstacy, quarrelled with my maid for being too long in taking leave of the other servants, and rejoiced as the ground grew less which lay between me and the completion of my wishes. A few days brought me to a large old house, encompassed on three sides with woody hills, and looking from the front on a gentle river, the sight of which renewed all my expectations of pleasure, and gave me some regret for having lived so long without the enjoyment which these delightful scenes were now to afford me. My aunt came out to receive me, but in a dress so far removed from the present fashion, that I could scarcely look upon her without laughter, which would have been no kind requital for the trouble which she had taken to make herself fine against my arrival. The night and the next morning were driven along with inquiries about our family; my aunt then explained our pedigree, and told me stories of my great grandfather's bravery in the civil wars, nor was it less than three days before I could persuade her to leave me to myself.

At last œconomy prevailed; she went in the usual manner about her own affairs, and I was at liberty to range in the wilderness, and sit by the cascade. The novelty of the objects about me pleased me for a while; but after a few days they were new no longer, and I soon began to perceive that the country was not my element; that shades, and flowers, and lawns, and waters, had very soon ex-

hausted all their power of pleasing, and that I had not in myself any fund of satisfaction, with which I could supply the loss of my customary amusements.

I unhappily told my aunt, in the first warmth of our embraces, that I had leave to stay with her ten weeks. Six only are yet gone, and how shall I live through the remaining four? I go out and return; I pluck a flower, and throw it away; I catch an insect, and when I have examined its colours set it at liberty; I fling a pebble into the water, and see one circle spread after another. When it chances to rain, I walk in the great hall, and watch the minute-hand upon the dial, or play with a litter of kittens, which the cat happens to have brought in a lucky time.

My aunt is afraid I shall grow melancholy, and therefore encourages the neighbouring gentry to visit us. They came at first with great eagerness to see the fine lady from London; but when we met, we had no common topick on which we could converse; they had no curiosity after plays, operas, or musick: and I find as little satisfaction from their accounts of the quarrels or alliances of families, whose names, when once I can escape, I shall never hear. The women have now seen me, know how my gown is made, and are satisfied; the men are generally afraid of me, and say little, because they think themselves not at liberty to talk rudely.

Thus I am condemned to solitude; the day moves slowly forward, and I see the dawn with uneasiness, because I consider that night is at a great distance. I have tried to sleep by a brook, but find its murmurs ineffectual; so that I am forced to be awake at least twelve hours, without visits, without cards, without laughter, and without flattery. I walk because I am disgusted with sitting still, and sit down because I am weary with walking. I have no motive to action, nor any object of love, or hate, or fear, or inclination. I cannot dress with spirit, for I have neither rival nor admirer. I cannot dance without a partner; nor be kind or cruel, without a lover.

Such is the life of Euphelia; and such it is likely to continue for a month to come. I have not yet declared against existence, nor called upon the destinies to cut my thread; but I have sincerely resolved not to condemn myself to such another summer, nor too hastily to flatter myself with happiness. Yet I have heard, Mr. Rambler, of those who never thought themselves so much at ease as in solitude, and cannot but suspect it to be some way or other my own fault, that, without great pain, either of mind or body, I am thus weary of myself: that the current of youth stagnates, and that I am languishing in a dead calm, for want of some external impulse. I shall therefore think you a benefactor to our sex, if you will teach me the art of living alone; for I am confident that a thousand and a thousand and a thousand ladies, who affect to talk with ecstasies of the pleasures of the country, are in reality, like me, longing for the winter, and wishing to be delivered from themselves by company and diversion.

I am, Sir, yours,

EUPHELIA.

N° 43. TUESDAY, *August* 14, 1750.

Flumine perpetuo torrens solet acrius ire,
Sed tamen hæc brevis est, illa perennis aqua.—OVID.

In course impetuous soon the torrent dries,
The brook a constant peaceful stream supplies.—F. LEWIS.

IT is observed by those who have written on the constitution of the human body, and the original of those diseases by which it is afflicted, that every man comes into the world morbid, that there is no temperature so exactly regulated but that some humour is fatally predominant, and that we are generally impregnated, in our first entrance upon life, with the seeds of that malady, which, in time, shall bring us to the grave.

This remark has been extended by others to the intel-

lectual faculties. Some that imagine themselves to have looked with more than common penetration into human nature, have endeavoured to persuade us that each man is born with a mind formed peculiarly for certain purposes, and with desires unalterably determined to particular objects, from which the attention cannot be long diverted, and which alone, as they are well or ill pursued, must produce the praise or blame, the happiness or misery of his future life.

This position has not, indeed, been hitherto proved with strength proportionate to the assurance with which it has been advanced, and perhaps will never gain much prevalence by a close examination.

If the doctrine of innate ideas be itself disputable, there seems to be little hope of establishing an opinion, which supposes that even complications of ideas have been given us at our birth, and that we are made by nature ambitious, or covetous, before we know the meaning of either power or money.

Yet as every step in the progression of existence changes our position with respect to the things about us, so as to lay us open to new assaults and particular dangers, and subjects us to inconveniencies from which any other situation is exempt; as a publick or a private life, youth and age, wealth and poverty, have all some evil closely adherent, which cannot wholly be escaped but by quitting the state to which it is annexed, and submitting to the incumbrances of some other condition; so it cannot be denied that every difference in the structure of the mind has its advantages and its wants; and that failures and defects being inseparable from humanity, however the powers of understanding be extended or contracted, there will on one side or the other always be an avenue to errour and miscarriage.

There seem to be some souls suited to great, and others to little employments; some formed to soar aloft, and take in wide views, and others to grovel on the ground, and confine their regard to a narrow sphere. Of these the

one is always in danger of becoming useless by a daring negligence, the other by a scrupulous solicitude; the one collects many ideas, but confused and indistinct; the other is busied in minute accuracy, but without compass and without dignity.

The general errour of those who possess powerful and elevated understandings, is, that they form schemes of too great extent, and flatter themselves too hastily with success; they feel their own force to be great, and by the complacency with which every man surveys himself, imagine it still greater; they therefore look out for undertakings worthy of their abilities, and engage in them with very little precaution, for they imagine that without premeditated measures, they shall be able to find expedients in all difficulties. They are naturally apt to consider all prudential maxims as below their regard, to treat with contempt those securities and resources which others know themselves obliged to provide, and disdain to accomplish their purposes by established means, and common gradations.

Precipitation thus incited by the pride of intellectual superiority, is very fatal to great designs. The resolution of the combat is seldom equal to the vehemence of the charge. He that meets with an opposition which he did not expect, loses his courage. The violence of his first onset is succeeded by a lasting and unconquerable languor; miscarriage makes him fearful of giving way to new hopes; and the contemplation of an attempt in which he has fallen below his own expectations is painful and vexatious; he therefore naturally turns his attention to more pleasing objects, and habituates his imagination to other entertainments, till, by slow degrees, he quits his first pursuit, and suffers some other project to take possession of his thoughts, in which the same ardour of mind promises him again certain success, and which disappointments of the same kind compel him to abandon.

Thus too much vigour in the beginning of an undertaking, often intercepts and prevents the steadiness and

perseverance always necessary in the conduct of a complicated scheme, where many interests are to be connected, many movements to be adjusted, and the joint effort of distinct and independent powers to be directed to a single point. In all important events which have been suddenly brought to pass, chance has been the agent rather than reason; and, therefore, however those who seemed to preside in the transaction, may have been celebrated by such as loved or feared them, succeeding times have commonly considered them as fortunate rather than prudent. Every design in which the connection is regularly traced from the first motion to the last, must be formed and executed by calm intrepidity, and requires not only courage which danger cannot turn aside, but constancy which fatigues cannot weary, and contrivance which impediments cannot exhaust.

All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance: it is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man was to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pick-axe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet those petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that those who have any intention of deviating from the beaten roads of life, and acquiring a reputation superiour to names hourly swept away by time among the refuse of fame, should add to their reason, and their spirit, the power of persisting in their purposes; acquire the art of sapping what they cannot batter, and the habit of vanquishing obstinate resistance by obstinate attacks.

The student who would build his knowledge on solid foundations, and proceed by just degrees to the pinnacles of truth, is directed by the great philosopher of France to

begin by doubting of his own existence. In like manner, whoever would complete any arduous and intricate enterprize, should, as soon as his imagination can cool after the first blaze of hope, place before his own eyes every possible embarrassment that may retard or defeat him. He should first question the probability of success, and then endeavour to remove the objections that he has raised. It is proper, says old Markham,* to exercise your horse on the more inconvenient side of the course, that if he should, in the race, be forced upon it, he may not be discouraged; and Horace advises his poetical friend to consider every day as the last which he shall enjoy, because that will always give pleasure which we receive beyond our hopes. If we alarm ourselves beforehand with more difficulties than we really find, we shall be animated by unexpected facility with double spirit; and if we find our cautions and fears justified by the consequence, there will however happen nothing against which provision has not been made, no sudden shock will be received, nor will the main scheme be disconcerted.

There is, indeed, some danger lest he that too scrupulously balances probabilities, and too perspicaciously foresees obstacles, should remain always in a state of inaction, without venturing upon attempts on which he may perhaps spend his labour without advantage. But previous despondence is not the fault of those for whom this essay is designed; they who require to be warned against precipitation, will not suffer more fear to intrude into their contemplations than is necessary to allay the effervescence of an agitated fancy. As Des Cartes has kindly shewn how a man may prove to himself his own existence, if once he can be prevailed upon to question it, so the ardent and adventurous will not be long without finding some plausible extenuation of the greatest difficulties. Such, indeed, is the uncertainty of all human affairs, that security and despair are equal follies; and as it is presumption and arrogance to anticipate triumphs, it is

* Gervase Markham, author of "Perfect Horsemanship," 12mo. 1671.

weakness and cowardice to prognosticate miscarriages. The numbers that have been stopped in their career of happiness are sufficient to shew the uncertainty of human foresight; but there are not wanting contrary instances of such success obtained against all appearances, as may warrant the boldest flights of genius, if they are supported by unshaken perseverance.

N° 44. SATURDAY, *August* 18, 1750.

Ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστι.—HOMER.

—— Dreams descend from Jove.—POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAD lately a very remarkable dream, which made so strong an impression on me, that I remember it every word; and if you are not better employed, you may read the relation of it as follows:

Methought I was in the midst of a very entertaining set of company, and extremely delighted in attending to a lively conversation, when on a sudden I perceived one of the most shocking figures imagination can frame, advancing towards me. She was drest in black, her skin was contracted into a thousand wrinkles, her eyes sunk deep in her head, and her complexion pale and livid as the countenance of death. Her looks were filled with terrour and unrelenting severity, and her hands armed with whips and scorpions. As soon as she came near, with a horrid frown, and a voice that chilled my very blood, she bid me follow her. I obeyed, and she led me through rugged paths, beset with briars and thorns, into a deep solitary valley. Wherever she passed, the fading verdure withered beneath her steps; her pestilential breath infected the air with malignant vapours, obscured the lustre of the sun, and involved the fair face of heaven in universal gloom. Dismal howlings resounded through the forest,

from every baleful tree the night raven uttered his dreadful note, and the prospect was filled with desolation and horrour. In the midst of this tremendous scene my execrable guide addressed me in the following manner:

"Retire with me, O rash unthinking mortal, from the vain allurements of a deceitful world, and learn that pleasure was not designed the portion of human life. Man was born to mourn and to be wretched; this is the condition of all below the stars, and whoever endeavours to oppose it, acts in contradiction to the will of Heaven. Fly then from the fatal enchantments of youth, and social delight, and here consecrate the solitary hours to lamentation and woe. Misery is the duty of all sublunary beings, and every enjoyment is an offence to the Deity, who is to be worshipped only by the mortification of every sense of pleasure, and the everlasting exercise of sighs and tears."

This melancholy picture of life quite sunk my spirits, and seemed to annihilate every principle of joy within me. I threw myself beneath a blasted yew, where the winds blew cold and dismal round my head, and dreadful apprehensions chilled my heart. Here I resolved to lie till the hand of death, which I impatiently invoked, should put an end to the miseries of a life so deplorably wretched. In this sad situation I espied on one hand of me a deep muddy river, whose heavy waves rolled on in slow sullen murmurs. Here I determined to plunge, and was just upon the brink, when I found myself suddenly drawn back. I turned about, and was surprised by the sight of the loveliest object I had ever beheld. The most engaging charms of youth and beauty appeared in all her form; effulgent glories sparkled in her eyes, and their awful splendours were softened by the gentlest looks of compassion and peace. At her approach the frightful spectre who had before tormented me, vanished away, and with her all the horrours she had caused. The gloomy clouds brightened into cheerful sunshine, the groves recovered their verdure, and the whole region looked gay and

blooming as the garden of Eden. I was quite transported at this unexpected change, and reviving pleasure began to glad my thoughts, when, with a look of inexpressible sweetness, my beauteous deliverer thus uttered her divine instructions:

"My name is RELIGION. I am the offspring of TRUTH and LOVE, and the parent of BENEVOLENCE, HOPE, and JOY. That monster from whose power I have freed you is called SUPERSTITION; she is the child of DISCONTENT, and her followers are FEAR and SORROW. Thus different as we are, she has often the insolence to assume my name and character, and seduces unhappy mortals to think us the same, till she, at length, drives them to the borders of DESPAIR, that dreadful abyss into which you were just going to sink.

"Look round and survey the various beauties of the globe, which Heaven has destined for the seat of the human race, and consider whether a world thus exquisitely framed could be meant for the abode of misery and pain. For what end has the lavish hand of Providence diffused such innumerable objects of delight, but that all might rejoice in the privilege of existence, and be filled with gratitude to the beneficent author of it? Thus to enjoy the blessings he has sent, is virtue and obedience; and to reject them merely as means of pleasure, is pitiable ignorance or absurd perverseness. Infinite goodness is the source of created existence; the proper tendency of every rational being, from the highest order of raptured seraphs, to the meanest rank of men, is to rise incessantly from the lower degrees of happiness to higher. They have each faculties assigned them for various orders of delights."

"What," cried I, "is this the language of RELIGION? Does she lead her votaries through flowery paths, and bid them pass an unlaborious life? Where are the painful toils of virtue, the mortifications of penitents, the self-denying exercises of saints and heroes?"

"The true enjoyments of a reasonable being," answered she mildly, "do not consist in unbounded indulgence, or

luxurious ease, in the tumult of passions, the languor of indolence, or the flutter of light amusements. Yielding to immoral pleasure corrupts the mind, living to animal and trifling ones debases it; both in their degree disqualify it for its genuine good, and consign it over to wretchedness. Whoever would be really happy, must make the diligent and regular exercise of his superior powers his chief attention, adoring the perfections of his Maker, expressing good-will to his fellow-creatures, cultivating inward rectitude. To his lower faculties he must allow such gratifications as will, by refreshing him, invigorate his nobler pursuits. In the regions inhabited by angelic natures, unmingled felicity for ever blooms, joy flows there with a perpetual and abundant stream, nor needs there any mound to check its course. Beings conscious of a frame of mind originally diseased, as all the human race has cause to be, must use the regimen of a stricter self-government. Whoever has been guilty of voluntary excesses must patiently submit both to the painful workings of nature, and needful severities of medicine, in order to his cure. Still he is entitled to a moderate share of whatever alleviating accommodations this fair mansion of his merciful Parent affords, consistent with his recovery. And in proportion as this recovery advances, the liveliest joy will spring from his secret sense of an amended and improving heart.—So far from the horrours of despair is the condition even of the guilty.—Shudder, poor mortal, at the thought of the gulf into which thou wast but now going to plunge.

"While the most faulty have every encouragement to amend, the more innocent soul will be supported with still sweeter consolations under all its experience of human infirmities; supported by the gladdening assurances that every sincere endeavour to outgrow them shall be assisted, accepted, and rewarded. To such a one the lowliest self-abasement is but a deep-laid foundation for the most elevated hopes; since they who faithfully examine and acknowledge what they are, shall be enabled under my conduct to become what they desire. The christian and the

hero are inseparable; and to aspirings of unassuming trust, and filial confidence are set no bounds. To him who is animated with a view of obtaining approbation from the Sovereign of the universe, no difficulty is insurmountable. Secure in this pursuit of every needful aid, his conflict with the severest pains and trials, is little more than the vigorous exercises of a mind in health. His patient dependence on that Providence which looks through all eternity, his silent resignation, his ready accommodation of his thoughts and behaviour to its inscrutable ways, is at once the most excellent sort of self-denial, and a source of the most exalted transports. Society is the true sphere of human virtue. In social, active life, difficulties will perpetually be met with; restraints of many kinds will be necessary; and studying to behave right in respect of these is a discipline of the human heart, useful to others, and improving to itself. Suffering is no duty, but where it is necessary to avoid guilt, or to do good; nor pleasure a crime, but where it strengthens the influence of bad inclinations, or lessens the generous activity of virtue. The happiness allotted to man in his present state, is indeed faint and low, compared with his immortal prospects, and noble capacities; but yet whatever portion of it the distributing hand of Heaven offers to each individual, is a needful support and refreshment for the present moment, so far as it may not hinder the attaining of his final destination.

" Return then with me from continual misery to moderate enjoyment and grateful alacrity. Return from the contracted views of solitude to the proper duties of a relative and dependent being. Religion is not confined to cells and closets, nor restrained to sullen retirement. These are the gloomy doctrines of SUPERSTITION, by which she endeavours to break those chains of benevolence and social affections, that link the welfare of every particular with that of the whole. Remember that the greatest honour you can pay to the Author of your being is by

such a cheerful behaviour, as discovers a mind satisfied with his dispensations."

Here my preceptress paused, and I was going to express my acknowledgments for her discourse, when a ring of bells from the neighbouring village, and a new-risen sun darting his beams through my windows, awaked me.*

I am, yours, &c.

N° 45. TUESDAY, *August* 21, 1750.

Ἥπερ μεγίστη γίγνεται σωτηρία,
Ὅταν γύνη πρὸς ἄνδρα μὴ διχοστατῇ,
Νῦν δ' ἐχθρὰ πάντα.—EURIP.

This is the chief felicity of life,
That concord smile on the connubial bed;
But now 'tis hatred all.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH, in the dissertations which you have given us on marriage, very just cautions are laid down against the common causes of infelicity, and the necessity of having, in that important choice, the first regard to virtue, is carefully inculcated; yet I cannot think the subject so much exhausted, but that a little reflection would present to the mind many questions, in the discussion of which great numbers are interested, and many precepts which deserve to be more particularly and forcibly impressed.

You seem, like most of the writers that have gone before you, to have allowed as an uncontested principle, that *Marriage is generally unhappy:* but I know not whether a man who professes to think for himself, and concludes from his own observations, does not depart from his character when he follows the crowd thus implicitly, and receives maxims without recalling them to a new examination, especially when they comprise so wide a circuit of life, and include such a variety of circumstances. As

* This paper, and No. 100, were from the pen of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter.

I have an equal right with others to give my opinion of the objects about me, and a better title to determine concerning that state which I have tried, than many who talk of it without experience, I am unwilling to be restrained by mere authority from advancing what, I believe, an accurate view of the world will confirm, that marriage is not commonly unhappy, otherwise than as life is unhappy; and that most of those who complain of connubial miseries, have as much satisfaction as their nature would have admitted, or their conduct procured, in any other condition.

It is, indeed, common to hear both sexes repine at their change, relate the happiness of their earlier years, blame the folly and rashness of their own choice, and warn those whom they see coming into the world against the same precipitance and infatuation. But it is to be remembered, that the days which they so much wish to call back, are the days not only of celibacy but of youth, the days of novelty and improvement, of ardour and of hope, of health and vigour of body, of gaiety and lightness of heart. It is not easy to surround life with any circumstances in which youth will not be delightful; and I am afraid that whether married or unmarried, we shall find the vesture of terrestrial existence more heavy and cumbrous, the longer it is worn.

That they censure themselves for the indiscretion of their choice, is not a sufficient proof that they have chosen ill, since we see the same discontent at every other part of life which we cannot change. Converse with almost any man, grown old in a profession, and you will find him regretting that he did not enter into some different course, to which he too late finds his genius better adapted, or in which he discovers that wealth and honour are more easily attained. "The merchant," says Horace, "envies the soldier, and the soldier recounts the felicity of the merchant; the lawyer, when his clients harass him, calls out for the quiet of the countryman; and the countryman, when business calls him to town, proclaims that there is

no happiness but amidst opulence and crowds." Every man recounts the inconveniences of his own station, and thinks those of any other less, because he has not felt them. Thus the married praise the ease and freedom of a single state, and the single fly to marriage from the weariness of solitude. From all our observations we may collect with certainty, that misery is the lot of man, but cannot discover in what particular condition it will find most alleviations; or whether all external appendages are not, as we use them, the causes either of good or ill.

Whoever feels great pain, naturally hopes for ease from change of posture; he changes it, and finds himself equally tormented: and of the same kind are the expedients by which we endeavour to obviate or elude those uneasinesses, to which mortality will always be subject. It is not likely that the married state is eminently miserable, since we see such numbers, whom the death of their partners has set free from it, entering it again.

Wives and husbands are, indeed, incessantly complaining of each other; and there would be reason for imagining that almost every house was infested with perverseness or oppression beyond human sufferance, did we not know upon how small occasions some minds burst out into lamentations and reproaches, and how naturally every animal revenges his pain upon those who happen to be near, without any nice examination of its cause. We are always willing to fancy ourselves within a little of happiness, and when, with repeated efforts, we cannot reach it, persuade ourselves that it is intercepted by an ill-paired mate, since, if we could find any other obstacle, it would be our own fault that it was not removed.

Anatomists have often remarked, that though our diseases are sufficiently numerous and severe, yet when we inquire into the structure of the body, the tenderness of some parts, the minuteness of others, and the immense multiplicity of animal functions that must concur to the healthful and vigorous exercise of all our powers, there appears reason to wonder rather that we are preserved so

long, than that we perish so soon, and that our frame subsists for a single day, or hour, without disorder, rather than that it should be broken or obstructed by violence of accidents, or length of time.

The same reflection arises in my mind, upon observation of the manner in which marriage is frequently contracted. When I see the avaricious and crafty, taking companions to their tables and their beds without any inquiry, but after farms and money; or the giddy and thoughtless uniting themselves for life to those whom they have only seen by the light of tapers at a ball; when parents make articles for their children, without inquiring after their consent; when some marry for heirs to disappoint their brothers, and others throw themselves into the arms of those whom they do not love, because they have found themselves rejected where they were most solicitous to please; when some marry because their servants cheat them, some because they squander their own money, some because their houses are pestered with company, some because they will live like other people, and some only because they are sick of themselves, I am not so much inclined to wonder that marriage is sometimes unhappy, as that it appears so little loaded with calamity; and cannot but conclude that society has something in itself eminently agreeable to human nature, when I find its pleasures so great, that even the ill choice of a companion can hardly overbalance them.

By the ancient custom of the Muscovites, the men and women never saw each other till they were joined beyond the power of parting. It may be suspected that by this method many unsuitable matches were produced, and many tempers associated that were not qualified to give pleasure to each other. Yet, perhaps, among a people so little delicate, where the paucity of gratifications, and the uniformity of life, gave no opportunity for imagination to interpose its objections, there was not much danger of capricious dislike; and while they felt neither cold nor

hunger they might live quietly together, without any thought of the defects of one another.

Amongst us, whom knowledge has made nice and affluence wanton, there are, indeed, more cautions requisite to secure tranquillity; and yet if we observe the manner in which those converse, who have singled out each other for marriage, we shall, perhaps, not think that the Russians lost much by their restraint. For the whole endeavour of both parties, during the time of courtship, is to hinder themselves from being known, and to disguise their natural temper, and real desires, in hypocritical imitation, studied compliance, and continual affectation. From the time that their love is avowed, neither sees the other but in a mask, and the cheat is managed often on both sides with so much art, and discovered afterwards with so much abruptness, that each has reason to suspect that some transformation has happened on the wedding-night, and that, by a strange imposture, one has been courted, and another married.

I desire you, therefore, Mr. Rambler, to question all who shall hereafter come to you with matrimonial complaints, concerning their behaviour in the time of courtship, and inform them that they are neither to wonder nor repine, when a contract begun with fraud has ended in disappointment. I am, &c.

N° 46. SATURDAY, *August* 25, 1750.

——— *Genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,*
Vix ea nostra voco.—OVID.

Nought from my birth or ancestors I claim;
All is my own, my honour and my shame.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

SINCE I find that you have paid so much regard to my complaints as to publish them, I am inclined by vanity, or gratitude, to continue our correspondence; and indeed,

without either of these motives, am glad of an opportunity to write, for I am not accustomed to keep in any thing that swells my heart, and have here none with whom I can freely converse. While I am thus employed, some tedious hours will slip away, and when I return to watch the clock, I shall find that I have disburdened myself of part of the day.

You perceive that I do not pretend to write with much consideration of any thing but my own convenience; and, not to conceal from you my real sentiments, the little time which I have spent, against my will, in solitary meditation, has not much contributed to my veneration for authors. I have now sufficient reason to suspect, that, with all your splendid professions of wisdom, and seeming regard for truth, you have very little sincerity; that you either write what you do not think, and willingly impose upon mankind, or that you take no care to think right, but while you set up yourselves as guides, mislead your followers by credulity or negligence; that you produce to the publick whatever notions you can speciously maintain, or elegantly express, without inquiring whether they are just, and transcribe hereditary falsehoods from old authors perhaps as ignorant and careless as yourselves.

You may perhaps wonder that I express myself with so much acrimony on a question in which women are supposed to have very little interest; and you are likely enough, for I have seen many instances of the sauciness of scholars, to tell me, that I am more properly employed in playing with my kittens, than in giving myself airs of criticism, and censuring the learned. But you are mistaken, if you imagine that I am to be intimidated by your contempt, or silenced by your reproofs. As I read, I have a right to judge; as I am injured, I have a right to complain; and these privileges, which I have purchased at so dear a rate, I shall not easily be persuaded to resign.

To read has, indeed, never been my business, but as there are hours of leisure in the most active life, I have passed the superfluities of time, which the diversions of the

town left upon my hands, in turning over a large collection of tragedies and romances, where, amongst other sentiments common to all authors of this class, I have found almost every page filled with the charms and happiness of a country life; that life to which every statesman in the highest elevation of his prosperity is contriving to retire; that life to which every tragic heroine in some scene or other wishes to have been born, and which is represented as a certain refuge from folly, from anxiety, from passion, and from guilt.

It was impossible to read so many passionate exclamations, and soothing descriptions, without feeling some desire to enjoy the state in which all this felicity was to be enjoyed; and therefore I received with raptures the invitation of my good aunt, and expected that by some unknown influence I should find all hopes and fears, jealousies and competitions, vanish from my heart upon my first arrival at the seats of innocence and tranquillity; that I should sleep in halcyon bowers, and wander in elysian gardens, where I should meet with nothing but the softness of benevolence, the candour of simplicity, and the cheerfulness of content; where I should see reason exerting her sovereignty over life, without any interruption from envy, avarice, or ambition, and every day passing in such a manner as the severest wisdom should approve.

This, Mr. Rambler, I tell you I expected, and this I had by a hundred authors been taught to expect. By this expectation I was led hither, and here I live in perpetual uneasiness, without any other comfort than that of hoping to return to London.

Having, since I wrote my former letter, been driven by the mere necessity of escaping from absolute inactivity, to make myself more acquainted with the affairs and inhabitants of this place, I am now no longer an absolute stranger to rural conversation and employments, but am far from discovering in them more innocence or wisdom, than in the sentiments or conduct of those with whom I have passed more cheerful and more fashionable hours.

It is common to reproach the tea-table, and the park, with giving opportunities and encouragement to scandal. I cannot wholly clear them from the charge; but must, however, observe in favour of the modish prattlers, thatif not by principle, we are at least by accident less guilty of defamation than the country ladies. For having greater numbers to observe and censure, we are commonly content to charge them only with their own faults or follies, and seldom give way to malevolence, but such as arises from some injury or affront, real or imaginary, offered to ourselves. But in these distant provinces, where the same families inhabit the same houses from age to age, they transmit and recount the faults of a whole succession. I have been informed how every estate in the neighbourhood was originally got, and find, if I may credit the accounts given me, that there is not a single acre in the hands of the right owner. I have been told of intrigues between beaus and toasts that have been now three centuries in their quiet graves, and am often entertained with traditional scandal on persons of whose names there would have been no remembrance, had they not committed somewhat that might disgrace their descendants.

In one of my visits I happened to commend the air and dignity of a young lady, who had just left the company; upon which two grave matrons looked with great slyness at each other, and the elder asked me whether I had ever seen the picture of Henry the Eighth. You may imagine that I did not immediately perceive the propriety of the question: but after having waited a while for information, I was told that the lady's grandmother had a great-great-grandmother that was an attendant on Anna Bullen, and supposed to have been too much a favourite of the king.

If once there happens a quarrel between the principal persons of two families, the malignity is continued without end, and it is common for old maids to fall out about some election, in which their grandfathers were competitors; the heart burnings of the civil war are not yet extinguished; there are two families in the neighbourhood who

have destroyed each other's game from the time of Philip and Mary; and when an account came of an inundation, which had injured the plantations of a worthy gentleman, one of the hearers remarked, with exultation, that he might now have some notion of the ravages committed by his ancestors in their retreat from Bosworth.

Thus malice and hatred descend here with an inheritance, and it is necessary to be well versed in history, that the various factions of this county may be understood. You cannot expect to be on good terms with families who are resolved to love nothing in common; and, in selecting your intimates, you are perhaps to consider which party you most favour in the barons' wars. I have often lost the good opinion of my aunt's visitants by confounding the interests of York and Lancaster, and was once censured for sitting silent when William Rufus was called a tyrant. I have, however, now thrown aside all pretences to circumspection, for I find it impossible in less than seven years to learn all the requisite cautions. At London, if you know your company, and their parents, you are safe: but you are here suspected of alluding to the slips of great-grandmothers, and of reviving contests which were decided in armour by the redoubted knights of ancient times. I hope therefore that you will not condemn my impatience, if I am weary of attending where nothing can be learned, and of quarrelling where there is nothing to contest, and that you will contribute to divert me while I stay here by some facetious performance.

I am, Sir,

EUPHELIA.

N° 47. Tuesday, *August* 28, 1750.

Quanquam his solatiis acquiescam, debilitor et frangor eâdem illâ humanitate quæ me, ut hoc ipsum permitterem, induxit. Non ideo tamen velim durior fieri: nec ignoro alios hujusmodi casus nihil amplius vocare quam damnum; eoque sibi magnos homines et sapientes videri. Qui an magni sapientesque sint, nescio: homines non sunt. Hominis est enim affici dolore, sentire: resistere tamen, et solatia admittere; non solatiis non egere.—Plin.

These proceedings have afforded me some comfort in my distress; notwithstanding which, I am still dispirited and unhinged by the same motives of humanity that induced me to grant such indulgences. However, I by no means wish to become less susceptible of tenderness. I know these kind of misfortunes would be estimated by other persons only as common losses, and from such sensations they would conceive themselves great and wise men. I shall not determine either their greatness or their wisdom; but I am certain they have no humanity. It is the part of a man to be affected with grief: to feel sorrow, at the same time that he is to resist it, and to admit of comfort.—Earl of Orrery.

Of the passions with which the mind of man is agitated, it may be observed, that they naturally hasten towards their own extinction, by inciting and quickening the attainment of their objects. Thus fear urges our flight, and desire animates our progress; and if there are some which perhaps may be indulged till they outgrow the good appropriated to their satisfaction, as it is frequently observed of avarice and ambition, yet their immediate tendency is to some means of happiness really existing, and generally within the prospect. The miser always imagines that there is a certain sum that will fill his heart to the brim; and every ambitious man, like king Pyrrhus, has an acquisition in his thoughts that is to terminate his labours, after which he shall pass the rest of his life in ease or gaiety, in repose or devotion.

Sorrow is perhaps the only affection of the breast that can be excepted from this general remark, and it therefore deserves the particular attention of those who have assumed the arduous province of preserving the balance of the mental constitution. The other passions are diseases indeed, but they necessarily direct us to their proper cure. A man at once feels the pain and knows the medicine, to

which he is carried with greater haste as the evil which requires it is more excruciating, and cures himself by unerring instinct, as the wounded stags of Crete are related by Ælian to have recourse to vulnerary herbs. But for sorrow there is no remedy provided by nature; it is often occasioned by accidents irreparable, and dwells upon objects that have lost or changed their existence; it required what it cannot hope, that the laws of the universe should be repealed; that the dead should return, or the past should be recalled.

Sorrow is not that regret for negligence or errour which may animate us to future care or activity, or that repentance of crimes for which, however irrevocable, our Creator has promised to accept it as an atonement; the pain which arises from these causes has very salutary effects, and is every hour extenuating itself by the reparation of those miscarriages that produce it. Sorrow is properly that state of the mind in which our desires are fixed upon the past, without looking forward to the future, an incessant wish that something were otherwise than it has been, a tormenting and harassing want of some enjoyment or possession which we have lost, and which no endeavours can possibly regain. Into such anguish many have sunk upon some sudden diminution of their fortune, an unexpected blast of their reputation, or the loss of children or of friends. They have suffered all sensibility of pleasure to be destroyed by a single blow, have given up for ever the hopes of substituting any other object in the room of that which they lament, resigned their lives to gloom and despondency, and worn themselves out in unavailing misery.

Yet so much is this passion the natural consequence of tenderness and endearment, that, however painful and however useless, it is justly reproachful not to feel it on some occasions; and so widely and constantly has it always prevailed, that the laws of some nations, and the customs of others, have limited a time for the external appearances of grief caused by the dissolution of close alliances, and the breach of domestick union.

It seems determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that sorrow is to a certain point laudable, as the offspring of love, or at least pardonable, as the effect of weakness; but that it ought not to be suffered to increase by indulgence, but must give way, after a stated time, to social duties, and the common avocations of life. It is at first unavoidable, and therefore must be allowed, whether with or without our choice; it may afterwards be admitted as a decent and affectionate testimony of kindness and esteem; something will be extorted by nature, and something may be given to the world. But all beyond the bursts of passion, or the forms of solemnity, is not only useless, but culpable; for we have no right to sacrifice, to the vain longings of affection, that time which Providence allows us for the task of our station.

Yet it too often happens that sorrow, thus lawfully entering, gains such a firm possession of the mind, that it is not afterwards to be ejected; the mournful ideas, first violently impressed and afterwards willingly received, so much engross the attention, as to predominate in every thought, to darken gaiety, and perplex ratiocination. An habitual sadness seizes upon the soul, and the faculties are chained to a single object, which can never be contemplated but with hopeless uneasiness.

From this state of dejection it is very difficult to rise to cheerfulness and alacrity; and therefore many who have laid down rules of intellectual health, think preservatives easier than remedies, and teach us not to trust ourselves with favourite enjoyments, not to indulge the luxury of fondness, but to keep our minds always suspended in such indifference, that we may change the objects about us without emotion.

An exact compliance with this rule might, perhaps, contribute to tranquillity, but surely it would never produce happiness. He that regards none so much as to be afraid of losing them, must live for ever without the gentle pleasures of sympathy and confidence; he must feel no melting fondness, no warmth of benevolence, nor any of those

honest joys which nature annexes to the power of pleasing. And as no man can justly claim more tenderness than he pays, he must forfeit his share in that officious and watchful kindness which love only can dictate, and those lenient endearments by which love only can soften life. He may justly be overlooked and neglected by such as have more warmth in their heart; for who would be the friend of him, whom, with whatever assiduity he may be courted, and with whatever services obliged, his principles will not suffer to make equal returns, and who, when you have exhausted all the instances of good-will, can only be prevailed on not to be an enemy?

An attempt to preserve life in a state of neutrality and indifference, is unreasonable and vain. If by excluding joy we could shut out grief, the scheme would deserve very serious attention; but since, however we may debar ourselves from happiness, misery will find its way at many inlets, and the assaults of pain will force our regard, though we may withhold it from the invitations of pleasure, we may surely endeavour to raise life above the middle point of apathy at one time, since it will necessarily sink below it at another.

But though it cannot be reasonable not to gain happiness for fear of losing it, yet it must be confessed, that in proportion to the pleasure of possession, will be for some time our sorrow for the loss; it is therefore the province of the moralist to enquire whether such pains may not quickly give way to mitigation. Some have thought that the most certain way to clear the heart from its embarrassment is to drag it by force into scenes of merriment. Others imagine, that such a transition is too violent, and recommend rather to sooth it into tranquillity, by making it acquainted with miseries more dreadful and afflictive, and diverting to the calamities of others the regards which we are inclined to fix too closely upon our own misfortunes.

It may be doubted whether either of those remedies will be sufficiently powerful. The efficacy of mirth it is

not always easy to try, and the indulgence of melancholy may be suspected to be one of those medicines, which will destroy, if it happens not to cure.

The safe and general antidote against sorrow is employment. It is commonly observed, that among soldiers and seamen, though there is much kindness, there is little grief; they see their friend fall without any of that lamentation which is indulged in security and idleness, because they have no leisure to spare from the care of themselves; and whoever shall keep his thoughts equally busy, will find himself equally unaffected with irretrievable losses.

Time is observed generally to wear out sorrow, and its effects might doubtless be accelerated by quickening the succession, and enlarging the variety of objects.

——— *Si tempore longo*
Leniri poterit luctus, tu sperne morari;
Qui sapiet sibi tempus erit.——GROTIUS.

'Tis long ere time can mitigate your grief;
To wisdom fly, she quickly brings relief.—F. LEWIS.

Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its passage to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life, and is remedied by exercise and motion.

N° 48. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 1, 1750.

Non est vivere, sed valere, vita.—MART.
For life is not to live, but to be well.—ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the innumerable follies, by which we lay up in our youth repentance and remorse for the succeeding part of our lives, there is scarce any against which warnings are of less efficacy, than the neglect of health. When the springs of motion are yet elastick, when the heart bounds with vigour, and the eye sparkles with spirit, it is with difficulty that we are taught to conceive the imbecility that every hour is bringing upon us, or to imagine that the

nerves which are now braced with so much strength, and the limbs which play with so much activity, will lose all their power under the gripe of time, relax with numbness, and totter with debility.

To the arguments which have been used against complaints under the miseries of life, the philosophers have, I think, forgot to add the incredulity of those to whom we recount our sufferings. But if the purpose of lamentation be to excite pity, it is surely superfluous for age and weakness to tell their plaintive stories; for pity presupposes sympathy, and a little attention will shew them, that those who do not feel pain, seldom think that it is felt; and a short recollection will inform almost every man, that he is only repaid the insult which he has given, since he may remember how often he has mocked infirmity, laughed at its cautions, and censured its impatience.

The valetudinarian race have made the care of health ridiculous by suffering it to prevail over all other considerations, as the miser has brought frugality into contempt, by permitting the love of money not to share, but to engross his mind: they both err alike, by confounding the means with the end; they grasp at health only to be well, as at money only to be rich; and forget that every terrestrial advantage is chiefly valuable, as it furnishes abilities for the exercise of virtue.

Health is indeed so necessary to all the duties, as well as pleasures of life, that the crime of squandering it is equal to the folly; and he that for a short gratification brings weakness and diseases upon himself, and for the pleasure of a few years passed in the tumults of diversion, and clamours of merriment, condemns the maturer and more experienced part of his life to the chamber and the couch, may be justly reproached, not only as a spendthrift of his own happiness, but as a robber of the publick; as a wretch that has voluntarily disqualified himself for the business of his station, and refused that part which Providence assigns him in the general task of human nature.

There are perhaps very few conditions more to be

pitied, than that of an active and elevated mind, labouring under the weight of a distempered body. The time of such a man is always spent in forming schemes, which a change of wind hinders him from executing, his powers fume away in projects and in hope, and the day of action never arrives. He lies down delighted with the thoughts of to-morrow, pleases his ambition with the fame he shall acquire, or his benevolence with the good he shall confer. But in the night the skies are overcast, the temper of the air is changed, he wakes in langour, impatience, and distraction, and has no longer any wish but for ease, nor any attention but to misery. It may be said that disease generally begins that equality which death completes; the distinctions which set one man so much above another are very little perceived in the gloom of a sick chamber, where it will be vain to expect entertainment from the gay, or instruction from the wise; where all human glory is obliterated, the wit is clouded, the reasoner perplexed, and the hero subdued; where the highest and brightest of mortal beings finds nothing left him but the consciousness of innocence.

There is among the fragments of the Greek poets a short hymn to Health, in which her power of exalting the happiness of life, of heightening the gifts of fortune, and adding enjoyment to possession, is inculcated with so much force and beauty, that no one, who has ever languished under the discomforts and infirmities of a lingering disease, can read it without feeling the images dance in his heart, and adding from his own experience new vigour to the wish, and from his own imagination new colours to the picture. The particular occasion of this little composition is not known, but it is probable that the author had been sick, and in the first raptures of returning vigour addressed Health in the following manner:

Ὑγίεια πρεσβίστα Μακάρων,
Μετὰ σοῦ ναίοιμι
Τὸ λειπόμενον βιοτᾶς·
Σὺ δέ μοι πρόφρων σύνοικος εἴης.

Εἴ γάς τις ἢ πλοῦτου χάρις ἢ τεκέων,
Τᾶς εὐδαίμονός τ' ἀνθρώποις
Βασιλήιδος ἀρχᾶς, ἢ πόθων,
Ὅυς κρυφίοις Αφροδίτης ἄρκυσιν θηρεύομεν,
Ἤ εἴ τις ἄλλα θεόθεν ἀνθρώποις τέρψις,
Ἤ πόνων ἀμπνοὰ πέφανται·
Μετὰ σεῖο, μάκαιρα Ὑγίεια,
Τέθηλε πάντα, καὶ λάμπει χαρίτων ἔαρ·
Σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς, οὐδεὶς εὐδαίμων πέλει.

Health, most venerable of the powers of heaven! with thee may the remaining part of my life be passed, nor do thou refuse to bless me with my residence. For whatever there is of beauty or of pleasure in wealth, in descendants, or in sovereign command, the highest summit of human enjoyment, or in those objects of desire which we endeavour to chase into the toils of love; whatever delight, or whatever solace is granted by the celestials, to soften our fatigues, in thy presence, thou parent of happiness, all those joys spread out and flourish: in thy presence blooms the spring of pleasure, and without thee no man is happy.

Such is the power of health, that without its co-operation every other comfort is torpid and lifeless, as the powers of vegetation without the sun. And yet this bliss is commonly thrown away in thoughtless negligence, or in foolish experiments on our own strength; we let it perish without remembering its value, or waste it, to show how much we have to spare; it is sometimes given up to the management of levity and chance, and sometimes sold for the applause of jollity and debauchery.

Health is equally neglected, and with equal impropriety, by the votaries of business and the followers of pleasure. Some men ruin the fabrick of their bodies by incessant revels, and others by intemperate studies; some batter it by excess, and others sap it by inactivity. To the noisy route of bacchanalian rioters, it will be to little purpose that advice is offered, though it requires no great abilities to prove, that he loses pleasure who loses health; their clamours are too loud for the whispers of caution, and they run the course of life with too much precipitance to stop at the call of wisdom. Nor perhaps will they that are busied in adding thousands to thousands, pay much regard to him that shall direct them to hasten more slowly to their wishes. Yet since lovers of money are generally cool, deliberate, and thoughtful, they might surely consider, that the greater good ought not to be sacrificed to

the less. Health is certainly more valuable than money, because it is by health that money is procured; but thousands and millions are of small avail to alleviate the protracted tortures of the gout, to repair the broken organs of sense, or resuscitate the powers of digestion. Poverty is, indeed, an evil from which we naturally fly; but let us not run from one enemy to another, nor take shelter in the arms of sickness.

——— *Projecere animam! quàm vellent æthere in alto*
Nunc et pauperiem, et duros tolerare labores!

For healthful indigence in vain they pray,
In quest of wealth who throw their lives away.

Those who lose their health in an irregular and impetuous pursuit of literary accomplishments are yet less to be excused; for they ought to know that the body is not forced beyond its strength, but with the loss of more vigour than is proportionate to the effect produced. Whoever takes up life beforehand, by depriving himself of rest and refreshment, must not only pay back the hours, but pay them back with usury: and for the gain of a few months but half enjoyed, must give up years to the listlessness of langour, and the implacability of pain. They whose endeavour is mental excellence, will learn, perhaps too late, how much it is endangered by diseases of the body, and find that knowledge may easily be lost in the starts of melancholy, the flights of impatience, and the peevishness of decrepitude.

N° 49. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 4, 1705.

Non omnis moriar; multaque pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam, usque ego posterâ
Crescam laude recens.—HOR.

Whole Horace shall not die; his songs shall save
The greatest portion from the greedy grave.—CREECH.

THE first motives of human actions are those appetites which Providence has given to man in common with the rest of the inhabitants of the earth. Immediately after

our birth, thirst and hunger incline us to the breast, which we draw by instinct, like other young creatures, and when we are satisfied, we express our uneasiness by importunate and incessant cries, till we have obtained a place or posture proper for repose.

The next call that rouses us from a state of inactivity is that of our passions; we quickly begin to be sensible of hope and fear, love and hatred, desire and aversion; these arising from the power of comparison and reflection, extend their range wider, as our reason strengthens, and our knowledge enlarges. At first we have no thought of pain, but when we actually feel it; we afterwards begin to fear it, yet not before it approaches us very nearly; but by degrees we discover it at a greater distance, and find it lurking in remote consequences. Our terrour in time improves into caution, and we learn to look round with vigilance and solicitude, to stop all the avenues at which misery can enter, and to perform or endure many things in themselves toilsome and unpleasing, because we know by reason, or by experience, that our labour will be overbalanced by the reward, that it will either procure some positive good, or avert some evil greater than itself.

But as the soul advances to a fuller exercise of its powers, the animal appetites, and the passions immediately arising from them, are not sufficient to find it employment; the wants of nature are soon supplied, the fear of their return is easily precluded, and something more is necessary to relieve the long intervals of inactivity, and to give those faculties, which cannot lie wholly quiescent, some particular direction. For this reason new desires and artificial passions are by degrees produced; and, from having wishes only in consequence of our wants, we begin to feel wants in consequence of our wishes; we persuade ourselves to set a value upon things which are of no use, but because we have agreed to value them; things which can neither satisfy hunger, nor mitigate pain, nor secure us from any real calamity, and which, therefore, we find of no esteem among those nations whose artless

and barbarous manners keep them always anxious for the necessaries of life.

This is the original of avarice, vanity, ambition, and generally of all those desires which arise from the comparison of our condition with that of others. He that thinks himself poor because his neighbour is richer; he that, like Cæsar, would rather be the first man of a v il lage, than the second in the capital of the world, has apparently kindled in himself desires which he never received from nature, and acts upon principles established only by the authority of custom.

Of these adscititious passions, some, as avarice and envy, are universally condemned; some, as friendship and curiosity, generally praised; but there are others about which the suffrages of the wise are divided, and of which it is doubted, whether they tend most to promote the happiness, or increase the miseries of mankind.

Of this ambiguous and disputable kind is the love of fame, a desire of filling the minds of others with admiration, and of being celebrated by generations to come with praises which we shall not hear. This ardour has been considered by some as nothing better than splendid madness, as a flame kindled by pride, and fanned by folly; for what, say they, can be more remote from wisdom, than to direct all our actions by the hope of that which is not to exist till we ourselves are in the grave? To pant after that which can never be possessed, and of which the value thus wildly put upon it, arises from this particular condition, that, during life, it is not to be obtained? To gain the favour, and hear the applauses of our contemporaries, is indeed equally desirable with any other prerogative of superiority, because fame may be of use to smooth the paths of life, to terrify opposition, and fortify tranquillity; but to what end shall we be the darlings of mankind, when we can no longer receive any benefits from their favour? It is more reasonable to wish for reputation, while it may yet be enjoyed, as Anacreon calls upon

his companions to give him for present use the wine and garlands which they purpose to bestow upon his tomb.

The advocates for the love of fame allege in its vindication, that it is a passion natural and universal; a flame lighted by Heaven, always burning with greatest vigour in the most enlarged and elevated minds. That the desire of being praised by posterity implies a resolution to deserve their praises, and that the folly charged upon it, is only a noble and disinterested generosity, which is not felt, and therefore not understood, by those who have been always accustomed to refer every thing to themselves, and whose selfishness has contracted their understandings. That the soul of man, formed for eternal life, naturally springs forward beyond the limits of corporeal existence, and rejoices to consider herself as co-operating with future ages, and as co-extended with endless duration. That the reproach urged with so much petulance, the reproach of labouring for what cannot be enjoyed, is founded on an opinion which may with great probability be doubted; for since we suppose the powers of the soul to be enlarged by its separation, why should we conclude that its knowledge of sublunary transactions is contracted or extinguished?

Upon an attentive and impartial review of the argument, it will appear that the love of fame is to be regulated rather than extinguished: and that men should be taught not to be wholly careless about their memory, but to endeavour that they may be remembered chiefly for their virtues, since no other reputation will be able to transmit any pleasure beyond the grave.

It is evident that fame, considered merely as the immortality of a name, is not less likely to be the reward of bad actions than of good; he therefore has no certain principle for the regulation of his conduct, whose single aim is not to be forgotten. And history will inform us, that this blind and undistinguishing appetite of renown has always been uncertain in its effects, and directed by ac-

cident or opportunity, indifferently to the benefit or devastation of the world. When Themistocles complained that the trophies of Miltiades hindered him from sleep, he was animated by them to perform the same services in the same cause. But Cæsar, when he wept at the sight of Alexander's picture, having no honest opportunities of action, let his ambition break out to the ruin of his country.

If, therefore, the love of fame is so far indulged by the mind as to become independent and predominant, it is dangerous and irregular; but it may be usefully employed as an inferiour and secondary motive, and will serve sometimes to revive our activity, when we begin to languish and lose sight of that more certain, more valuable, and more durable reward, which ought always to be our first hope and our last. But it must be strongly impressed upon our minds that virtue is not to be pursued as one of the means to fame, but fame to be accepted as the only recompence which mortals can bestow on virtue; to be accepted with complacence, but not sought with eagerness. Simply to be remembered is no advantage; it is a privilege which satire as well as panegyrick can confer, and is not more enjoyed by Titus or Constantine, than by Timocreon of Rhodes, of whom we only know from his epitaph, *that he had eaten many a meal, drunk many a flaggon, and uttered many a reproach.*

Πολλὰ φαγὼν, καὶ πολλὰ πιὼν, καὶ πολλὰ κακ' εἰπὼν
Ἀνθρώπους, κεῖμαι Τιμοκρέων Ῥόδιος.

The true satisfaction which is to be drawn from the consciousness that we shall share the attention of future times, must arise from the hope, that with our name, our virtues will be propagated; and that those whom we cannot benefit in our lives, may receive instruction from our examples, and incitement from our renown.

N° 50. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 8, 1750.

Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat, atque
Barbato cuicunque puer, licet ipse videret
Plura domi fraga, et majores glandis acervos.—JUV.

And had not men the hoary head rever'd,
And boys paid rev'rence when a man appear'd,
Both must have died, though richer skins they wore,
And saw more heaps of acorns in their store.—CREECH.

I HAVE always thought it the business of those who turn their speculations upon the living world, to commend the virtues, as well as to expose the faults of their contemporaries, and to confute a false as well as to support a just accusation; not only because it is peculiarly the business of a monitor to keep his own reputation untainted, lest those who can once charge him with partiality, should indulge themselves afterwards in disbelieving him at pleasure; but because he may find real crimes sufficient to give full employment to caution or repentance, without distracting the mind by needless scruples and vain solicitudes.

There are certain fixed and stated reproaches that one part of mankind has in all ages thrown upon another, which are regularly transmitted through continued successions, and which he that has once suffered them is certain to use with the same undistinguishing vehemence, when he has changed his station, and gained the prescriptive right of inflicting on others what he had formerly endured himself.

To these hereditary imputations, of which no man sees the justice, till it becomes his interest to see it, very little regard is to be shewn; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion, and supported rather by willingness to credit, than ability to prove, them.

It has been always the practice of those who are desirous to believe themselves made venerable by length of time,

to censure the new comers into life, for want of respect to grey hairs and sage experience, for heady confidence in their own understandings, for hasty conclusions upon partial views, for disregard of counsels, which their fathers and grandsires are ready to afford them, and a rebellious impatience of that subordination to which youth is condemned by nature, as necessary to its security from evils into which it would be otherwise precipitated, by the rashness of passion, and the blindness of ignorance.

Every old man complains of the growing depravity of the world, of the petulance and insolence of the rising generation. He recounts the decency and regularity of former times, and celebrates the discipline and sobriety of the age in which his youth was passed; a happy age, which is now no more to be expected, since confusion has broken in upon the world and thrown down all the boundaries of civility and reverence.

It is not sufficiently considered how much he assumes who dares to claim the privilege of complaining; for as every man has, in his own opinion, a full share of the miseries of life, he is inclined to consider all clamorous uneasiness, as a proof of impatience rather than of affliction, and to ask, What merit has this man to shew, by which he has acquired a right to repine at the distributions of nature? Or, why does he imagine that exemptions should be granted him from the general condition of man? We find ourselves excited rather to captiousness than pity, and instead of being in haste to soothe his complaints by sympathy and tenderness, we enquire, whether the pain be proportionate to the lamentation; and whether, supposing the affliction real, it is not the effect of vice and folly, rather than calamity.

The querulousness and indignation which is observed so often to disfigure the last scene of life, naturally leads us to enquiries like these. For surely it will be thought at the first view of things, that if age be thus contemned and ridiculed, insulted and neglected, the crime must at least be equal on either part. They who have had opportunities of establishing their authority over minds duc-

tile and unresisting, they who have been the protectors of helplessness, and the instructors of ignorance, and who yet retain in their own hands the power of wealth, and the dignity of command, must defeat their influence by their own misconduct, and make use of all these advantages with very little skill, if they cannot secure to themselves an appearance of respect, and ward off open mockery, and declared contempt.

The general story of mankind will evince, that lawful and settled authority is very seldom resisted when it is well employed. Gross corruption, or evident imbecility, is necessary to the suppression of that reverence with which the majority of mankind look upon their governors, and on those whom they see surrounded by splendour, and fortified by power. For though men are drawn by their passions into forgetfulness of invisible rewards and punishments, yet, they are easily kept obedient to those who have temporal dominion in their hands, till their veneration is dissipated by such wickedness and folly as can neither be defended nor concealed.

It may, therefore, very reasonably be suspected that the old draw upon themselves the greatest part of those insults which they so much lament, and that age is rarely despised but when it is contemptible. If men imagine that excess of debauchery can be made reverend by time, that knowledge is the consequence of long life, however idly or thoughtlessly employed, that priority of birth will supply the want of steadiness or honesty, can it raise much wonder that their hopes are disappointed, and that they see their posterity rather willing to trust their own eyes in their progress into life, than enlist themselves under guides who have lost their way?

There are, indeed, many truths which time necessarily and certainly teaches, and which might, by those who have learned them from experience, be communicated to their successors at a cheaper rate: but dictates, though liberally enough bestowed, are generally without effect, the teacher gains few proselytes by instruction which his own behaviour contradicts; and young men miss the

benefit of counsel, because they are not very ready to believe that those who fall below them in practice, can much excel them in theory. Thus the progress of knowledge is retarded, the world is kept long in the same state, and every new race is to gain the prudence of their predecessors by committing and redressing the same miscarriages.

To secure to the old that influence which they are willing to claim, and which might so much contribute to the improvement of the arts of life, it is absolutely necessary that they give themselves up to the duties of declining years; and contentedly resign to youth its levity, its pleasures, its frolicks, and its fopperies. It is a hopeless endeavour to unite the contrarieties of spring and winter; it is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood. The young always form magnificent ideas of the wisdom and gravity of men, whom they consider as placed at a distance from them in the ranks of existence, and naturally look on those whom they find trifling with long beards, with contempt and indignation, like that which women feel at the effeminacy of men. If dotards will contend with boys in those performances in which boys must always excel them; if they will dress crippled limbs in embroidery, endeavour at gaiety with faultering voices, and darken assemblies of pleasure with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed will hoot them away; and that if they descend to competition with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.

Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti:
Tempus abire tibi est.

You 've had your share of mirth, of meat and drink;
'Tis time to quit the scene—'tis time to think.—ELPHINSTON.

Another vice of age, by which the rising generation may be alienated from it, is severity and censoriousness, that gives no allowance to the failings of early life, that expects artfulness from childhood, and constancy from youth, that is peremptory in every command, and inexorable to every failure. There are many who live merely to

hinder happiness, and whose descendants can only tell of long life, that it produces suspicion, malignity, peevishness, and persecution; and yet even these tyrants can talk of the ingratitude of the age, curse their heirs for impatience, and wonder that young men cannot take pleasure in their father's company.

He that would pass the latter part of life with honour and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old; and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young. In youth he must lay up knowledge for his support, when his powers of acting shall forsake him; and in age forbear to animadvert with rigour on faults which experience only can correct.

N° 51. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 11, 1750.

——— *Stultus labor est ineptiarum.*—MART.

How foolish is the toil of trifling cares!—ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have allowed a place in your paper to Euphelia's letters from the country, and appear to think no form of human life unworthy of your attention, I have resolved, after many struggles with idleness and diffidence, to give you some account of my entertainment in this sober season of universal retreat, and to describe to you the employments of those who look with contempt on the pleasures and diversions of polite life, and employ all their powers of censure and invective upon the uselessness, vanity, and folly, of dress, visits, and conversation.

When a tiresome and vexatious journey of four days had brought me to the house, where invitation, regularly sent for seven years together, had at last induced me to pass the summer, I was surprised, after the civilities of my first reception, to find, instead of the leisure and tranquillity, which a rural life always promises, and, if well

conducted, might always afford, a confused wildness of care, and a tumultuous hurry of diligence, by which every face was clouded, and every motion agitated. The old lady, who was my father's relation, was, indeed, very full of the happiness which she received from my visit, and according to the forms of obsolete breeding, insisted that I should recompence the long delay of my company with a promise not to leave her till winter. But amidst all her kindness and caresses, she very frequently turned her head aside, and whispered, with anxious earnestness, some order to her daughters, which never failed to send them out with unpolite precipitation. Sometimes her impatience would not suffer her to stay behind; she begged my pardon, she must leave me for a moment; she went and returned and sat down again, but was again disturbed by some new care, dismissed her daughters with the same trepidation, and followed them with the same countenance of business and solicitude.

However I was alarmed at this show of eagerness and disturbance, and however my curiosity was excited by such busy preparations as naturally promised some great event, I was yet too much a stranger to gratify myself with enquiries; but finding none of the family in mourning, I pleased myself with imagining that I should rather see a wedding than a funeral.

At last we sat down to supper, when I was informed that one of the young ladies, after whom I thought myself obliged to enquire, was under a necessity of attending some affair that could not be neglected: Soon afterward my relation began to talk of the regularity of her family, and the inconvenience of London hours; and at last let me know that they had purposed that night to go to bed sooner than was usual, because they were to rise early in the morning to make cheesecakes. This hint sent me to my chamber, to which I was accompanied by all the ladies, who begged me to excuse some large sieves of leaves and flowers that covered two-thirds of the floor, for they

intended to distil them when they were dry, and they had no other room that so conveniently received the rising sun.

The scent of the plants hindered me from rest, and therefore I rose early in the morning with a resolution to explore my new habitation. I stole unperceived by my busy cousins into the garden, where I found nothing either more great or elegant, than in the same number of acres cultivated for the market. Of the gardener I soon learned that his lady was the greatest manager in that part of the country, and that I was come hither at the time in which I might learn to make more pickles and conserves, than could be seen at any other house a hundred miles round.

It was not long before her ladyship gave me sufficient opportunities of knowing her character, for she was too much pleased with her own accomplishments to conceal them, and took occasion, from some sweetmeats which she set next day upon the table, to discourse for two long hours upon robs and jellies; laid down the best methods of conserving, reserving, and preserving all sorts of fruit; told us with great contempt of the London lady in the neighbourhood, by whom these terms were very often confounded; and hinted how much she should be ashamed to set before company, at her own house, sweetmeats of so dark a colour as she had often seen at mistress Sprightly's.

It is, indeed, the great business of her life, to watch the skillet on the fire, to see it simmer with the due degree of heat, and to snatch it off at the moment of projection; and the employments to which she has bred her daughters, are to turn rose-leaves in the shade, to pick out the seeds of currants with a quill, to gather fruit without bruising it, and to extract bean-flower water for the skin. Such are the tasks with which every day, since I came hither, has begun and ended, to which the early hours of life are sacrificed, and in which that time is passing away which never shall return.

But to reason or expostulate are hopeless attempts. The lady has settled her opinions, and maintains the dig-

nity of her own performances with all the firmness of stupidity accustomed to be flattered. Her daughters, having never seen any house but their own, believe their mother's excellence on her own word. Her husband is a mere sportsman, who is pleased to see his table well furnished, and thinks the day sufficiently successful, in which he brings home a leash of hares to be potted by his wife.

After a few days I pretended to want books, but my lady soon told me that none of her books would suit my taste; for her part she never loved to see young women give their minds to such follies, by which they would only learn to use hard words; she bred up her daughters to understand a house, and whoever should marry them, if they knew any thing of good cookery, would never repent it.

There are, however, some things in the culinary sciences too sublime for youthful intellects, mysteries into which they must not be initiated till the years of serious maturity, and which are referred to the day of marriage, as the supreme qualification for connubial life. She makes an orange pudding, which is the envy of all the neighbourhood, and which she has hitherto found means of mixing and baking with such secrecy, that the ingredient to which it owes its flavour has never been discovered. She, indeed, conducts this great affair with all the caution that human policy can suggest. It is never known beforehand when this pudding will be produced; she takes the ingredients privately into her own closet, employs her maids and daughters in different parts of the house, orders the oven to be heated for a pie, and places the pudding in it with her own hands, the mouth of the oven is then stopped, and all enquiries are vain.

The composition of the pudding she has, however promised Clarinda, that if she pleases her in marriage, she shall be told without reserve. But the art of making English capers she has not yet persuaded herself to discover, but seems resolved that secret shall perish with

her, as some alchymists have obstinately suppressed the art of transmuting metals.

I once ventured to lay my fingers on her book of receipts, which she left upon the table, having intelligence that a vessel of gooseberry wine had burst the hoops. But though the importance of the event sufficiently engrossed her care, to prevent any recollection of the danger to which her secrets were exposed, I was not able to make use of the golden moments; for this treasure of hereditary knowledge was so well concealed by the manner of spelling used by her grandmother, and herself, that I was totally unable to understand it, and lost the opportunity of consulting the oracle, for want of knowing the language in which its answers were returned.

It is, indeed, necessary, if I have any regard to her ladyship's esteem, that I should apply myself to some of these economical accomplishments; for I overheard her, two days ago, warning her daughters, by my mournful example, against negligence of pastry, and ignorance in carving: for you saw, said she, that, with all her pretensions to knowledge, she turned the partridge the wrong way when she attempted to cut it, and, I believe scarcely knows the difference between paste raised, and paste in a dish.

The reason, Mr. Rambler, why I have laid Lady Bustle's character before you, is a desire to be informed whether, in your opinion, it is worthy of imitation, and whether I shall throw away the books which I have hitherto thought it my duty to read, for *The Lady's Closet opened*, *The Complete Servant Maid*, and *The Court Cook*, and resign all curiosity after right and wrong, for the art of scalding damascenes without bursting them, and preserving the whiteness of pickled mushrooms.

Lady Bustle has, indeed, by this incessant application to fruits and flowers, contracted her cares into a narrow space, and set herself free from many perplexities with which other minds are disturbed. She has no curiosity

after the events of a war, or the fate of heroes in distress; she can hear, without the least emotion, the ravage of a fire, or devastations of a storm; her neighbours grow rich or poor, come into the world or go out of it, without regard, while she is pressing the jelly-bag, or airing the store-room; but I cannot perceive that she is more free from disquiets than those whose understandings take a wider range. Her marigolds, when they are almost cured, are often scattered by the wind, and the rain sometimes falls upon fruit, when it ought to be gathered dry. While her artificial wines are fermenting, her whole life is restlessness and anxiety. Her sweetmeats are not always bright, and the maid sometimes forgets the just proportions of salt and pepper, when venison is to be baked. Her conserves mould, her wines sour, and pickles mother; and, like all the rest of mankind, she is every day mortified with the defeat of her schemes, and the disappointment of her hopes.

With regard to vice and virtue she seems a kind of neutral being. She has no crime but luxury, nor any virtue but chastity; she has no desire to be praised but for her cookery; nor wishes any ill to the rest of mankind, but that whenever they aspire to a feast, their custards may be wheyish, and their pie-crusts tough.

I am now very impatient to know whether I am to look on these ladies as the great patterns of our sex, and to consider conserves and pickles as the business of my life; whether the censures which I now suffer be just, and whether the brewers of wines, and the distillers of washes, have a right to look with insolence on the weakness of

CORNELIA.

N° 52. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 15, 1750.

——— *Quoties flenti Theseius heros*
Siste modum, dixit, neque enim fortuna querenda
Sola tua est, similes aliorum respice casus,
Mitius ista feres.—OVID.

How oft in vain the son of Theseus said,
The stormy sorrows be with patience laid;
Nor are thy fortunes to be wept alone,
Weigh others' woes, and learn to bear thy own.—CATCOTT.

AMONG the various methods of consolation, to which the miseries inseparable from our present state have given occasion, it has been, as I have already remarked, recommended by some writers to put the sufferer in mind of heavier pressures, and more excruciating calamities, than those of which he has himself reason to complain.

This has, in all ages, been directed and practised; and, in conformity to this custom, Lipsius, the great modern master of the Stoick philosophy, has, in his celebrated treatise on *Steadiness of Mind*, endeavoured to fortify the breast against too much sensibility of misfortune, by enumerating the evils which have in former ages fallen upon the world, the devastation of wide-extended regions, the sack of cities, and massacre of nations. And the common voice of the multitude, uninstructed by precept, and unprejudiced by authority, which, in questions that relate to the heart of man, is, in my opinion, more decisive than the learning of Lipsius, seems to justify the efficacy of this procedure: for one of the first comforts which one neighbour administers to another, is a relation of the like infelicity, combined with circumstances of greater bitterness.

But this medicine of the mind is like many remedies applied to the body, of which, though we see the effects, we are unacquainted with the manner of operation, and of which, therefore, some, who are unwilling to suppose any thing out of the reach of their own sagacity, have been inclined to doubt whether they have really those virtues for which they are celebrated, and whether their

reputation is not the mere gift of fancy, prejudice, and credulity.

Consolation, or comfort, are words which, in their proper acceptation, signify some alleviation of that pain to which it is not in our power to afford the proper and adequate remedy; they imply rather an augmentation of the power of bearing, than a diminution of the burthen. A prisoner is relieved by him that sets him at liberty, but receives comfort from such as suggest considerations by which he is made patient under the inconvenience of confinement. To that grief which arises from a great loss, he only brings the true remedy, who makes his friend's condition the same as before; but he may be properly termed a comforter, who by persuasion extenuates the pain of poverty, and shews, in the style of Hesiod, that *half is more than the whole.*

It is, perhaps, not immediately obvious, how it can lull the memory of misfortune, or appease the throbbings of anguish, to hear that others are more miserable; others, perhaps, unknown or wholly indifferent, whose prosperity raises no envy, and whose fall can gratify no resentment. Some topicks of comfort arising, like that which gave hope and spirit to the captive of Sesostris, from the perpetual vicissitudes of life, and mutability of human affairs, may as properly raise the dejected as depress the proud, and have an immediate tendency to exhilarate and revive. But how can it avail the man who languishes in the gloom of sorrow, without prospect of emerging into the sunshine of cheerfulness, to hear that others are sunk yet deeper in the dungeon of misery, shackled with heavier chains, and surrounded with darker desperation?

The solace arising from this consideration seems indeed the weakest of all others, and is perhaps never properly applied, but in cases where there is no place for reflections of more speedy and pleasing efficacy. But even from such calamities life is by no means free; a thousand ills incurable, a thousand losses irreparable, a thousand difficulties insurmountable are known, or will be known,

by all the sons of men. Native deformity cannot be rectified, a dead friend cannot return, and the hours of youth trifled away in folly, or lost in sickness, cannot be restored.

Under the oppression of such melancholy, it has been found useful to take a survey of the world, to contemplate the various scenes of distress in which mankind are struggling round us, and acquaint ourselves with the *terribiles visu formæ*, the various shapes of misery, which make havock of terrestrial happiness, range all corners almost without restraint, trample down our hopes at the hour of harvest, and, when we have built our schemes to the top, ruin their foundations.

The first effect of this meditation is, that it furnishes a new employment for the mind, and engages the passions on remoter objects; as kings have sometimes freed themselves from a subject too haughty to be governed and too powerful to be crushed, by posting him in a distant province, till his popularity has subsided, or his pride been repressed. The attention is dissipated by variety, and acts more weakly upon any single part, as that torrent may be drawn off to different channels, which, pouring down in one collected body, cannot be resisted. This species of comfort is, therefore, unavailing in severe paroxysms of corporal pain, when the mind is every instant called back to misery, and in the first shock of any sudden evil; but will certainly be of use against encroaching melancholy, and a settled habit of gloomy thoughts.

It is further advantageous, as it supplies us with opportunities of making comparisons in our own favour. We know that very little of the pain, or pleasure, which does not begin and end in our senses, is otherwise than relative; we are rich or poor, great or little, in proportion to the number that excel us, or fall beneath us, in any of these respects; and therefore, a man, whose uneasiness arises from reflection on any misfortune that throws him below those with whom he was once equal, is comforted by finding that he is not yet the lowest.

There is another kind of comparison, less tending towards the vice of envy, very well illustrated by an old poet*, whose system will not afford many reasonable motives to content. "It is," says he, "pleasing to look from shore upon the tumults of a storm, and to see a ship struggling with the billows; it is pleasing, not because the pain of another can give us delight, but because we have a stronger impression of the happiness of safety." Thus, when we look abroad, and behold the multitudes that are groaning under evils heavier than those which we have experienced, we shrink back to our own state, and instead of repining that so much must be felt, learn to rejoice that we have not more to feel.

By this observation of the miseries of others, fortitude is strengthened, and the mind brought to a more extensive knowledge of her own powers. As the heroes of action catch the flame from one another, so they to whom Providence has allotted the harder task of suffering with calmness and dignity, may animate themselves by the remembrance of those evils which have been laid on others, perhaps naturally as weak as themselves, and bear up with vigour and resolution against their own oppressions, when they see it possible that more severe afflictions may be borne.

There is still another reason why, to many minds, the relation of other men's infelicity may give a lasting and continual relief. Some, not well instructed in the measures by which Providence distributes happiness, are perhaps misled by divines, who, as Bellarmine makes temporal prosperity one of the characters of the true church, have represented wealth and ease as the certain concomitants of virtue, and the unfailing result of the divine approbation. Such sufferers are dejected in their misfortunes, not so much for what they feel, as for what they dread; not because they cannot support the sorrows, or endure the wants, of their present condition, but because they consider them as only the beginnings of more sharp and more lasting pains. To these mourners it is an act

* Lucretius.

of the highest charity to represent the calamities which not only virtue has suffered, but virtue has incurred; to inform them that one evidence of a future state, is the uncertainty of any present reward for goodness; and to remind them, from the highest authority, of the distresses and penury of men *of whom the world was not worthy.*

N° 53. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 18, 1750.

Φείδεο τῶν κτεανῶν.—*Epigram. Vet.*

Husband thy possessions.

THERE is scarcely among the evils of human life any so generally dreaded as poverty. Every other species of misery, those, who are not much accustomed to disturb the present moment with reflection, can easily forget, because it is not always forced upon their regard; but it is impossible to pass a day or an hour in the confluxes of men, without seeing how much indigence is exposed to contumely, neglect, and insult; and, in its lowest state, to hunger and nakedness; to injuries against which every passion is in arms, and to wants which nature cannot sustain.

Against other evils the heart is often hardened by true or by false notions of dignity and reputation: thus we see dangers of every kind faced with willingness, because bravery in a good or bad cause is never without its encomiasts and admirers. But in the prospect of poverty, there is nothing but gloom and melancholy; the mind and body suffer together; its miseries bring no alleviations; it is a state in which every virtue is obscured, and in which no conduct can avoid reproach; a state in which cheerfulness is insensibility, and dejection sullenness, of which the hardships are without honour, and the labours without reward.

Of these calamities there seems not to be wanting a general conviction; we hear on every side the noise of trade, and see the streets thronged with numberless multitudes, whose faces are clouded with anxiety, and whose

steps are hurried by precipitation, from no other motive than the hope of gain; and the whole world is put in motion, by the desire of that wealth, which is chiefly to be valued as it secures us from poverty; for it is more useful for defence than acquisition, and is not so much able to procure good as to exclude evil.

Yet there are always some whose passions or follies lead them to a conduct opposite to the general maxims and practice of mankind; some who seem to rush upon poverty with the same eagerness with which others avoid it, who see their revenues hourly lessened, and the estates which they inherit from their ancestors mouldering away, without resolution to change their course of life; who persevere against all remonstrances, and go forward with full career, though they see before them the precipice of destruction.

It is not my purpose in this paper, to expostulate with such as ruin their fortunes by expensive schemes of buildings and gardens, which they carry on with the same vanity that prompted them to begin, chusing, as it happens in a thousand other cases, the remote evil before the lighter, and deferring the shame of repentance till they incur the miseries of distress. Those for whom I intend my present admonitions, are the thoughtless, the negligent, and the dissolute; who having, by the viciousness of their own inclinations, or the seducements of alluring companions, been engaged in habits of expence, and accustomed to move in a certain round of pleasures disproportioned to their condition, are without power to extricate themselves from the enchantments of custom, avoid thought because they know it will be painful, and continue from day to day, and from month to month, to anticipate their revenues, and sink every hour deeper into the gulphs of usury and extortion.

This folly has less claim to pity, because it cannot be imputed to the vehemence of sudden passion; nor can the mischief which it produces be extenuated as the effect of any single act, which rage, or desire, might execute before

there could be time for an appeal to reason. These men are advancing towards misery by soft approaches, and destroying themselves, not by the violence of a blow, which, when once given, can never be recalled, but by a slow poison, hourly repeated, and obstinately continued.

This conduct is so absurd when it is examined by the unprejudiced eye of rational judgment, that nothing but experience could evince its possibility; yet, absurd as it is, the sudden fall of some families, and the sudden rise of others, prove it to be common; and every year sees many wretches reduced to contempt and want, by their costly sacrifices to pleasure and vanity.

It is the fate of almost every passion, when it has passed the bounds which nature prescribes, to counteract its own purpose. Too much rage hinders the warrior from circumspection, too much eagerness of profit hurts the credit of the trader, too much ardour takes away from the lover that easiness of address with which ladies are delighted. Thus extravagance, though dictated by vanity, and incited by voluptuousness, seldom procures ultimately either applause or pleasure.

If praise be justly estimated by the character of those from whom it is received, little satisfaction will be given to the spendthrift by the encomiums which he purchases. For who are they that animate him in his pursuits, but young men thoughtless and abandoned like himself, unacquainted with all on which the wisdom of nations has impressed the stamp of excellence, and devoid alike of knowledge and of virtue? By whom is his profusion praised, but by wretches who consider him as subservient to their purposes, Sirens that entice him to shipwreck, and Cyclops that are gaping to devour him?

Every man, whose knowledge, or whose virtue, can give value to his opinion, looks with scorn, or pity, neither of which can afford much gratification to pride, on him whom the panders of luxury have drawn into the circle of their influence, and whom he sees parcelled out among the different ministers of folly, and about to be torn to

piece by tailors and jockies, vintners and attornies, who at once rob and ridicule him, and who are secretly triumphing over his weakness, when they present new incitements to his appetite, and heighten his desires by counterfeited applause.

Such is the praise that is purchased by prodigality. Even when it is yet not discovered to be false, it is the praise only of those whom it is reproachful to please, and whose sincerity is corrupted by their interest; men who live by the riots which they encourage, and who know that whenever their pupil grows wise, they shall lose their power. Yet with such flatteries, if they could last, might the cravings of vanity, which is seldom very delicate, be satisfied; but the time is always hastening forward when this triumph, poor as it is, shall vanish, and when those who now surround him with obsequiousness and compliments, fawn among his equipage, and animate his riots, shall turn upon him with insolence, and reproach him with the vices promoted by themselves.

And as little pretensions has the man who squanders his estate, by vain or vicious expences, to greater degrees of pleasure than are obtained by others. To make any happiness sincere, it is necessary that we believe it to be lasting; since whatever we suppose ourselves in danger of losing, must be enjoyed with solicitude and uneasiness, and the more value we set upon it, the more must the present possession be imbittered. How can he then be envied for his felicity, who knows that its continuance cannot be expected, and who is conscious that a very short time will give him up to the gripe of poverty, which will be harder to be borne, as he has given way to more excesses, wantoned in greater abundance, and indulged his appetites with more profuseness?

It appears evident that frugality is necessary even to complete the pleasure of expence; for it may be generally remarked of those who squander what they know their fortune not sufficient to allow, that in their most jovial expence, there always breaks out some proof of discontent and impatience; they either scatter with a kind of wild

desperation, and affected lavishness, as criminals brave the gallows when they cannot escape it, or pay their money with a peevish anxiety, and endeavour at once to spend idly, and to save meanly: having neither firmness to deny their passions, nor courage to gratify them, they murmur at their own enjoyments, and poison the bowl of pleasure by reflection on the cost.

Among these men there is often the vociferation of merriment, but very seldom the tranquillity of cheerfulness; they inflame their imaginations to a kind of momentary jollity, by the help of wine and riot, and consider it as the first business of the night to stupify recollection, and lay that reason asleep which disturbs their gaiety, and calls upon them to retreat from ruin.

But this poor broken satisfaction is of short continuance, and must be expiated by a long series of misery and regret. In a short time the creditor grows impatient, the last acre is sold, the passions and appetites still continue their tyranny, with incessant calls for their usual gratifications, and the remainder of life passes away in vain repentance, or impotent desire.

N° 54. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 22, 1750.

Truditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ;
Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus, et sepulchri
Immemor struis domos.—HOR.

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd doom to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies.—FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAVE lately been called, from a mingled life of business and amusement, to attend the last hours of an old friend; an office which has filled me, if not with melancholy, at least with serious reflections, and turned my

thoughts towards the contemplation of those subjects, which though of the utmost importance, and of indubitable certainty, are generally secluded from our regard, by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation; or if they become accidental topicks of conversation and argument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, but give occasion only to some subtilties of reasoning, or elegancies of declamation, which are heard, applauded, and forgotten.

It is, indeed, not hard to conceive how a man accustomed to extend his views through a long concatenation of causes and effects, to trace things from their origin to their period, and compare means with ends, may discover the weakness of human schemes; detect the fallacies by which mortals are deluded; shew the insufficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to real happiness; and please himself, and his auditors, with learned lectures on the vanity of life.

But though the speculatist may see and shew the folly of terrestrial hopes, fears, and desires, every hour will give proofs that he never felt it. Trace him through the day or year, and you will find him acting upon the principles which he has in common with the illiterate and unenlightened, angry and pleased like the lowest of the vulgar, pursuing, with the same ardour, the same designs, grasping, with all the eagerness of transport, those riches which he knows he cannot keep, and swelling with the applause which he has gained by proving that applause is of no value.

The only conviction that rushes upon the soul, and takes away from our appetites and passions the power of resistance, is to be found, where I have received it, at the bed of a dying friend. To enter this school of wisdom is not the peculiar privilege of geometricians; the most sublime and important precepts require no uncommon opportunities, nor laborious preparations; they are enforced without the aid of eloquence, and understood without skill in analytick science. Every tongue can utter them, and

every understanding can conceive them. He that wishes in earnest to obtain just sentiments concerning his condition, and would be intimately acquainted with the world, may find instructions on every side. He that desires to enter behind the scene, which every art has been employed to decorate, and every passion labours to illuminate, and wishes to see life stripped of those ornaments which make it glitter on the stage, and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness, may find all the delusion laid open in the chamber of disease: he will there find vanity divested of her robes, power deprived of her sceptre, and hypocrisy without her mask.

The friend whom I have lost was a man eminent for genius, and, like others of the same class, sufficiently pleased with acceptance and applause. Being caressed by those who have preferments and riches in their disposal, he considered himself as in the direct road of advancement, and had caught the flame of ambition by approaches to its object. But in the midst of his hopes, his projects, and his gaieties, he was seized by a lingering disease, which, from its first stage, he knew to be incurable. Here was an end of all his visions of greatness and happiness; from the first hour that his health declined, all his former pleasures grew tasteless. His friends expected to please him by those accounts of the growth of his reputation, which were formerly certain of being well received; but they soon found how little he was now affected by compliments, and how vainly they attempted, by flattery, to exhilarate the languor of weakness, and relieve the solicitude of approaching death. Whoever would know how much piety and virtue surpass all external goods, might here have seen them weighed against each other, where all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of hope, and pants in the bosom of suspicion, at once became dust in the balance, without weight and without regard. Riches, authority, and praise, lose all their influence when they are considered as riches which to-morrow shall be bestowed upon

another, authority which shall this night expire for ever, and praise which, however merited, or however sincere, shall, after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness; nor to excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another state, and all conversation was tedious, that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past, we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of passions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terrour without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong to be diverted, and too piercing to be endured; but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind, the effects which the observation of death produces, in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for, by far the greater part, it is wholly unregarded. Their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulph of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death increases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace

observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness, which we feared for its malignity, is now become impotent, and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage, and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity, or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish for his return, not so much that we may receive, as that we may bestow happiness, and recompence that kindness which before we never understood.

There is not, perhaps, to a mind well instructed, a more painful occurrence, than the death of one whom we have injured without reparation. Our crime seems now irretrievable, it is indelibly recorded, and the stamp of fate is fixed upon it. We consider, with the most afflictive anguish, the pain which we have given, and now cannot alleviate, and the losses which we have caused, and now cannot repair.

Of the same kind are the emotions which the death of an emulator or competitor produces. Whoever had qualities to alarm our jealousy, had excellence to deserve our fondness; and to whatever ardour of opposition interest may inflame us, no man ever outlived an enemy, whom he did not then wish to have made a friend. Those who are versed in literary history know, that the elder Scaliger was the redoubted antagonist of Cardan and Erasmus; yet at the death of each of his great rivals he relented, and complained that they were snatched away from him before their reconciliation was completed.

Tune etiam moreris? Ah! quid me linquis, Erasme,
Ante meus quam sit conciliatus amor?

Art thou too fallen? ere anger could subside
And love return, has great Erasmus died?

Such are the sentiments with which we finally review the effects of passion, but which we sometimes delay till we can no longer rectify our errours. Let us therefore make haste to do what we shall certainly at last wish to have done; let us return the caresses of our friends, and endeavour by mutual endearments to heighten that tenderness which is the balm of life. Let us be quick to repent of injuries while repentance may not be a barren anguish, and let us open our eyes to every rival excellence, and pay early and willingly those honours which justice will compel us to pay at last. ATHANATUS.

N° 55. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 25, 1750.

Maturo propior desine funeri
Inter ludere virgines,
Et stellis maculam spargere candidis:
Non siquid Pholoen satis
Et te, Chlori, decet.——HOR.

Now near to death that comes but slow,
Now thou art stepping down below;
Sport not amongst the blooming maids,
But think on ghosts and empty shades:
What suits with Pholoe in her bloom,
Grey Chloris will not thee become;
A bed is different from a tomb.—CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAVE been but a little time conversant in the world, yet I have already had frequent opportunities of observing the little efficacy of remonstrance and complaint, which, however extorted by oppression, or supported by reason, are detested by one part of the world as rebellion, censured by another as peevishness, by some heard with an appearance of compassion, only to betray any of those sallies of vehemence and resentment, which are apt to break out upon encouragement, and by others passed over with indifference and neglect, as matters in which they have no concern, and which if they should endeavour to

examine or regulate, they might draw mischief upon themselves.

Yet since it is no less natural for those who think themselves injured to complain, than for others to neglect their complaints, I shall venture to lay my case before you, in hopes that you will enforce my opinion, if you think it just, or endeavour to rectify my sentiments, if I am mistaken. I expect, at least, that you will divest yourself of partiality, and that whatever your age or solemnity may be, you will not, with the dotard's insolence, pronounce me ignorant and foolish, perverse and refractory, only because you perceive that I am young.

My father dying when I was but ten years old, left me, and a brother two years younger than myself, to the care of my mother, a woman of birth and education, whose prudence or virtue he had no reason to distrust. She felt, for some time, all the sorrow which nature calls forth, upon the final separation of persons dear to one another; and as her grief was exhausted by its own violence, it subsided into tenderness for me and my brother, and the year of mourning was spent in caresses, consola tions, and instruction, in celebration of my father's virtues, in professions of perpetual regard to his memory, and hourly instances of such fondness as gratitude will not easily suffer me to forget.

But when the term of this mournful felicity was expired, and my mother appeared again without the ensigns of sorrow, the ladies of her acquaintance began to tell her, upon whatever motives, that it was time to live like the rest of the world; a powerful argument, which is seldom used to a woman without effect. Lady Giddy was incessantly relating the occurrences of the town, and Mrs. Gravely told her privately, with great tenderness, that it began to be publickly observed how much she overacted her part, and that most of her acquaintance suspected her hope of procuring another husband to be the true ground of all that appearance of tenderness and piety.

All the officiousness of kindness and folly was busied

to change her conduct. She was at one time alarmed with censure, and at another fired with praise. She was told of balls, where others shone only because she was absent; of new comedies, to which all the town was crowding; and of many ingenious ironies, by which domestick diligence was made contemptible.

It is difficult for virtue to stand alone against fear on one side, and pleasure on the other; especially when no actual crime is proposed, and prudence itself can suggest many reasons for relaxation and indulgence. My mamma was at last persuaded to accompany Miss Giddy to a play. She was received with a boundless profusion of compliments, and attended home by a very fine gentleman. Next day she was with less difficulty prevailed on to play at Mrs. Gravely's and came home gay and lively; for the distinctions that had been paid her awakened her vanity, and good luck had kept her principles of frugality from giving her disturbance. She now made her second entrance into the world, and her friends were sufficiently industrious to prevent any return to her former life; every morning brought messages of invitation, and every evening was passed in places of diversion, from which she for some time complained that she had rather be absent. In a short time she began to feel the happiness of acting without controul, of being unaccountable for her hours, her expences, and her company; and learned by degrees to drop an expression of contempt, or pity, at the mention of ladies whose husbands were suspected of restraining their pleasures, or their play, and confessed that she loved to go and come as she pleased.

I was still favoured with some incidental precepts and transient endearments, and was now and then fondly kissed for smiling like my papa: but most part of her morning was spent in comparing the opinion of her maid and milliner, contriving some variation in her dress, visiting shops, and sending compliments; and the rest of the day was too short for visits, cards, plays, and concerts.

She now began to discover that it was impossible to

educate children properly at home. Parents could not have them always in their sight; the society of servants was contagious; company produced boldness and spirit; emulation excited industry; and a large school was naturally the first step into the open world. A thousand other reasons she alleged, some of little force in themselves, but so well seconded by pleasure, vanity, and idleness, that they soon overcame all the remaining principles of kindness and piety, and both I and my brother were despatched to boarding schools.

How my mamma spent her time when she was thus disburthened, I am not able to inform you; but I have reason to believe that trifles and amusements took still faster hold of her heart. At first, she visited me at school, and afterwards wrote to me; but in a short time, both her visits and her letters were at an end, and no other notice was taken of me than to remit money for my support.

When I came home at the vacation, I found myself coldly received, with an observation, "that this girl will presently be a woman." I was, after the usual stay, sent to school again, and overheard my mother say, as I was a-going, "Well, now I shall recover."

In six months more I came again, and, with the usual childish alacrity, was running to my mother's embrace, when she stopt me with exclamations at the suddenness and enormity of my growth, having, she said, never seen any body shoot up so much at my age. She was sure no other girls spread at that rate, and she hated to have children look like women before their time. I was disconcerted, and retired without hearing any thing more than "Nay, if you are angry, Madam Steeple, you may walk off."

When once the forms of civility are violated, there remains little hope of return to kindness or decency. My mamma made this appearance of resentment a reason for continuing her malignity; and poor Miss Maypole, for that was my appellation, was never mentioned or spoken to but with some expression of anger or dislike.

She had yet the pleasure of dressing me like a child, and I know not when I should have been thought fit to change my habit, had I not been rescued by a maiden sister of my father, who could not bear to see women in hanging-sleeves, and therefore presented me with brocade for a gown, for which I should have thought myself under great obligations, had she not accompanied her favour with some hints that my mamma might now consider her age, and give me her ear-rings, which she had shewn long enough in publick places.

I now left the school, and came to live with my mamma, who considered me as an usurper that had seized the rights of a woman before they were due, and was pushing her down the precipice of age, that I might reign without a superiour. While I am thus beheld with jealousy and suspicion, you will readily believe that it is difficult to please. Every word and look is an offence. I never speak, but I pretend to some qualities and excellencies which it is criminal to possess; if I am gay, she thinks it early enough to coquette; if I am grave, she hates a prude in bibs; if I venture into company, I am in haste for a husband; if I retire to my chamber, such matron-like ladies are lovers of contemplation. I am on one pretence or other generally excluded from her assemblies, nor am I ever suffered to visit at the same place with my mamma. Every one wonders why she does not bring Miss more into the world, and when she comes home in vapours I am certain that she has heard either of my beauty or my wit, and expect nothing for the ensuing week but taunts and menaces, contradiction and reproaches.

Thus I live in a state of continual persecution, only because I was born ten years too soon, and cannot stop the course of nature or of time, but am unhappily a woman before my mother can willingly cease to be a girl. I believe you would contribute to the happiness of many families, if, by any arguments or persuasions, you could make mothers ashamed of rivalling their children; if you could shew them, that though they may refuse to grow

wise, they must inevitably grow old; and that the proper solaces of age are not musick and compliments, but wisdom and devotion; that those who are so unwilling to quit the world will soon be driven from it; and that it is therefore their interest to retire while there yet remain a few hours for nobler employments.

I am, &c.

N° 56. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 29, 1750.

—— *Valeat res ludicra, si me*
Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum.—HOR.

Farewell the stage; for humbly I disclaim
Such fond pursuits of pleasure, or of fame,
If I must sink in shame, or swell with pride,
As the gay palm is granted or denied.—FRANCIS.

NOTHING is more unpleasing than to find that offence has been received when none was intended, and that pain has been given to those who were not guilty of any provocation. As the great end of society is mutual beneficence, a good man is always uneasy when he finds himself acting in opposition to the purposes of life; because, though his conscience may easily acquit him of *malice prepense*, of settled hatred or contrivances of mischief, yet he seldom can be certain, that he has not failed by negligence, or indolence; that he has not been hindered from consulting the common interest by too much regard to his own ease, or too much indifference to the happiness of others.

Nor is it necessary, that, to feel this uneasiness, the mind should be extended to any great diffusion of generosity, or melted by uncommon warmth of benevolence; for that prudence which the world teaches, and a quick sensibility of private interest, will direct us to shun needless enmities; since there is no man whose kindness we may not some time want, or by whose malice we may not some time suffer.

I have therefore frequently looked with wonder, and

now and then with pity, at the thoughtlessness with which some alienate from themselves the affections of all whom chance, business, or inclination, brings in their way. When we see a man pursuing some darling interest, without much regard to the opinion of the world, we justly consider him as corrupt and dangerous, but are not long in discovering his motives; we see him actuated by passions which are hard to be resisted, and deluded by appearances which have dazzled stronger eyes. But the greater part of those who set mankind at defiance by hourly irritation, and who live but to infuse malignity, and multiply enemies, have no hopes to foster, no designs to promote, nor any expectations of attaining power by insolence, or of climbing to greatness by trampling on others. They give up all the sweets of kindness, for the sake of peevishness, petulance, or gloom; and alienate the world by neglect of the common forms of civility, and breach of the established laws of conversation.

Every one must, in the walks of life, have met with men of whom all speak with censure, though they are not chargeable with any crime, and whom none can be persuaded to love, though a reason can scarcely be assigned why they should be hated; and who, if their good qualities and actions sometimes force a commendation, have their panegyrick always concluded with confessions of disgust; "he is a good man, but I cannot like him." Surely such persons have sold the esteem of the world at too low a price, since they have lost one of the rewards of virtue, without gaining the profits of wickedness.

This ill economy of fame is sometimes the effect of stupidity. Men whose preceptions are languid and sluggish, who lament nothing but loss of money, and feel nothing but a blow, are often at a difficulty to guess why they are encompassed with enemies, though they neglect all those arts by which men are endeared to one another. They comfort themselves that they have lived irreproachably; that none can charge them with having endangered his life, or diminished his possessions; and

therefore conclude that they suffer by some invincible fatality, or impute the malice of their neighbours to ignorance or envy. They wrap themselves up in their innocence, and enjoy the congratulations of their own hearts, without knowing or suspecting that they are every day deservedly incurring resentments, by withholding from those with whom they converse, that regard, or appearance of regard, to which every one is entitled by the customs of the world.

There are many injuries which almost every man feels, though he does not complain, and which, upon those whom virtue, elegance, or vanity, have made delicate and tender, fix deep and lasting impressions; as there are many arts of graciousness and conciliation, which are to be practised without expence, and by which those may be made our friends, who have never received from us any real benefit. Such arts, when they include neither guilt nor meanness, it is surely reasonable to learn; for who would want that love which is so easily to be gained? And such injuries are to be avoided; for who would be hated without profit?

Some, indeed, there are, for whom the excuse of ignorance or negligence cannot be alleged, because it is apparent that they are not only careless of pleasing, but studious to offend; that they contrive to make all approaches to them difficult and vexatious, and imagine that they aggrandize themselves by wasting the time of others in useless attendance, by mortifying them with slights, and teazing them with affronts.

Men of this kind are generally to be found among those that have not mingled much in general conversation, but spent their lives amidst the obsequiousness of dependants, and the flattery of parasites; and by long consulting only their own inclination, have forgotten that others have claim to the same deference.

Tyranny thus avowed, is indeed an exuberance of pride, by which all mankind is so much enraged, that it is never quietly endured, except in those who can reward the patience which they exact; and insolence is generally

surrounded only by such whose baseness inclines them to think nothing insupportable that produces gain, and who can laugh at scurrility and rudeness with a luxurious table and an open purse.

But though all wanton provocations and contemptuous insolence are to be diligently avoided, there is no less danger in timid compliance and tame resignation. It is common for soft and fearful tempers to give themselves up implicitly to the direction of the bold, the turbulent, and the overbearing; of those whom they do not believe wiser or better than themselves; to recede from the best designs where opposition must be encountered, and to fall off from virtue for fear of censure.

Some firmness and resolution is necessary to the discharge of duty; but it is a very unhappy state of life in which the necessity of such struggles frequently occurs; for no man is defeated without some resentment, which will be continued with obstinacy while he believes himself in the right, and exerted with bitterness, if even to his own conviction he is detected in the wrong.

Even though no regard be had to the external consequences of contrariety and dispute, it must be painful to a worthy mind to put others in pain; and there will be danger lest the kindest nature may be vitiated by too long a custom of debate and contest.

I am afraid that I may be taxed with insensibility by many of my correspondents, who believe their contributions unjustly neglected. And, indeed, when I sit before a pile of papers, of which each is the production of laborious study, and the offspring of a fond parent, I, who know the passions of an author, cannot remember how long they have lain in my boxes unregarded, without imagining to myself the various changes of sorrow, impatience, and resentment, which the writers must have felt in this tedious interval.

These reflections are still more awakened, when, upon perusal, I find some of them calling for a place in the next

paper, a place which they have never yet obtained: others writing in a style of superiority and haughtiness, as secure of deference, and above fear of criticism; others humbly offering their weak assistance with softness and submission, which they believe impossible to be resisted; some introducing their compositions with a menace of the contempt which he that refuses them will incur; others applying privately to the booksellers for their interest and solicitation; every one by different ways endeavouring to secure the bliss of publication. I cannot but consider myself as placed in a very incommodious situation, where I am forced to repress confidence, which it is pleasing to indulge, to repay civilities with appearances of neglect, and so frequently to offend those by whom I never was offended.

I know well how rarely an author, fired with the beauties of his new composition, contains his raptures in his own bosom, and how naturally he imparts to his friends his expectations of renown; and as I can easily conceive the eagerness with which a new paper is snatched up, by one who expects to find it filled with his own production, and perhaps has called his companions to share the pleasure of a second perusal, I grieve for the disappointment which he is to feel at the fatal inspection. His hopes, however, do not yet forsake him; he is certain of giving lustre the next day. The next day comes, and again he pants with expectation, and having dreamed of laurels and Parnassus, casts his eyes upon the barren page, with which he is doomed never more to be delighted.

For such cruelty what atonement can be made? For such calamities what alleviation can be found? I am afraid that the mischief already done must be without reparation, and all that deserves my care is prevention for the future. Let therefore the next friendly contributor, whoever he be, observe the cautions of Swift, and write secretly in his own chamber, without communicating his design to his nearest friend, for the nearest friend will be pleased with

an opportunity of laughing. Let him carry it to the post himself, and wait in silence for the event. If it is published and praised, he may then declare himself the author; if it be suppressed, he may wonder in private without much vexation; and if it be censured, he may join in the cry, and lament the dulness of the writing generation.

N° 57. TUESDAY, *October* 2, 1750.

Non intelligunt homines quàm magnum vectigal sit parsimonia.—TULL.

The world has not yet learned the riches of frugality.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM always pleased when I see literature made useful, and scholars descending from that elevation, which, as it raises them above common life, must likewise hinder them from beholding the ways of men otherwise than in a cloud of bustle and confusion. Having lived a life of business, and remarked how seldom any occurrences emerge for which great qualities are required, I have learned the necessity of regarding little things; and though I do not pretend to give laws to the legislators of mankind, or to limit the range of those powerful minds that carry light and heat through all the regions of knowledge, yet I have long thought, that the greatest part of those who lose themselves in studies by which I have not found that they grow much wiser, might, with more advantage both to the publick and themselves, apply their understandings to domestick arts, and store their minds with axioms of humble prudence, and private economy.

Your late paper on frugality was very elegant and pleasing, but, in my opinion, not sufficiently adapted to common readers, who pay little regard to the musick of periods, the artifice of connection, or the arrangement of the flowers of rhetorick; but require a few plain and cogent instructions, which may sink into the mind by their own weight.

Frugality is so necessary to the happiness of the world, so beneficial in its various forms to every rank of men, from the highest of human potentates, to the lowest labourer or artificer; and the miseries which the neglect of it produces are so numerous and so grievous, that it ought to be recommended with every variation of address, and adapted to every class of understanding.

Whether those who treat morals as a science will allow frugality to be numbered among the virtues, I have not thought it necessary to inquire. For I, who draw my opinions from a careful observation of the world, am satisfied with knowing what is abundantly sufficient for practice, that if it be not a virtue, it is, at least, a quality, which can seldom exist without some virtues, and without which few virtues can exist. Frugality may be termed the daughter of prudence, the sister of temperance, and the parent of liberty. He that is extravagant will quickly become poor, and poverty will enforce dependence, and invite corruption; it will almost always produce a passive compliance with the wickedness of others; and there are few who do not learn by degress to practice those crimes which they cease to censure.

If there are any who do not dread poverty as dangerous to virtue, yet mankind seem unanimous enough in abhorring it as destructive to happiness; and all to whom want is terrible, upon whatever principle, ought to think themselves obliged to learn the sage maxims of our parsimonious ancestors, and attain the salutary arts of contracting expence; for without frugality none can be rich, and with it very few would be poor.

To most other acts of virtue or exertions of wisdom, a concurrence of many circumstances is necessary, some previous knowledge must be attained, some uncommon gifts of nature possessed, or some opportunity produced by an extraordinary combination of things; but the mere power of saving what is already in our hands, must be easy of acquisition to every mind; and as the example of Bacon may shew, that the highest intellect cannot safely neglect

it, a thousand instances will every day prove, that the meanest may practise it with success.

Riches cannot be within the reach of great numbers, because to be rich is to possess more than is commonly placed in a single hand; and, if many could obtain the sum which now makes a man wealthy, the name of wealth must then be transferred to still greater accumulation. But I am not certain that it is equally impossible to exempt the lower classes of mankind from poverty; because, though whatever be the wealth of the community, some will always have least, and he that has less than any other is comparatively poor; yet I do not see any coactive necessity that many should be without the indispensable conveniences of life; but am sometimes inclined to imagine, that, casual calamities excepted, there might, by universal prudence, be procured an universal exemption from want; and that he who should happen to have least, might notwithstanding have enough.

But without entering too far into speculations which I do not remember that any political calculator has attempted, and in which the most perspicacious reasoner may be easily bewildered, it is evident that they to whom Providence has allotted no other care but of their own fortune and their own virtue, which make far the greater part of mankind, have sufficient incitements to personal frugality; since, whatever might be its general effect upon provinces or nations, by which it is never likely to be tried, we know with certainty, that there is scarcely any individual entering the world, who, by prudent parsimony, may not reasonably promise himself a cheerful competence in the decline of life.

The prospect of penury in age is so gloomy and terrifying, that every man who looks before him must resolve to avoid it; and it must be avoided generally by the science of sparing. For, though in every age there are some, who by bold adventures, or by favourable accidents, rise suddenly to riches, yet it is dangerous to indulge hopes of such rare events: and the bulk of mankind must owe their

affluence to small and gradual profits, below which their expence must be resolutely reduced.

You must not therefore think me sinking below the dignity of a practical philosopher, when I recommend to the consideration of your readers, from the statesman to the apprentice, a position replete with mercantile wisdom, *A penny saved is two-pence got;* which may, I think, be accommodated to all conditions, by observing not only that they who pursue any lucrative employment will save time when they forbear expence, and that the time may be employed to the increase of profit; but that they who are above such minute considerations will find, by every victory over appetite or passion, new strength added to the mind, will gain the power of refusing those solicitations by which the young and vivacious are hourly assaulted, and in time set themselves above the reach of extravagance and folly.

It may, perhaps, be inquired by those who are willing rather to cavil than to learn, what is the just measure of frugality? and when expence, not absolutely necessary, degenerates into profusion? To such questions no general answer can be returned; since the liberty of spending, or necessity of parsimony, may be varied without end by different circumstances. It may, however, be laid down as a rule never to be broken, that a *man's voluntary expence should not exceed his revenue.* A maxim so obvious and incontrovertible, that the civil law ranks the prodigal with the madman, and debars them equally from the conduct of their own affairs. Another precept arising from the former, and indeed included in it, is yet necessary to be distinctly impressed upon the warm, the fanciful, and the brave; *Let no man anticipate uncertain profits.* Let no man presume to spend upon hopes, to trust his own abilities for means of deliverance from penury, to give a loose to his present desires, and leave the reckoning to fortune or to virtue.

To these cautions, which, I suppose, are, at least among the graver part of mankind, undisputed, I will add another,

Let no man squander against his inclination. With this precept it may be, perhaps, imagined easy to comply: yet if those whom profusion has buried in prisons, or driven into banishment, were examined, it would be found that very few were ruined by their own choice, or purchased pleasure with the loss of their estates; but that they suffered themselves to be borne away by the violence of those with whom they conversed, and yielded reluctantly to a thousand prodigalities, either from a trivial emulation of wealth and spirit, or a mean fear of contempt and ridicule; an emulation for the prize of folly, or the dread of the laugh of fools.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

SOPHRON.

N° 58. SATURDAY, *October* 6, 1750.

——— *Improbæ*
Crescunt divitiæ, tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei.—HOR.

But, while in heaps his wicked wealth ascends,
He is not of his wish possess'd;
There 's something wanting still to make him bless'd.—FRANCIS.

As the love of money has been, in all ages, one of the passions that have given great disturbance to the tranquillity of the world, there is no topick more copiously treated by the ancient moralists than the folly of devoting the heart to the accumulation of riches. They who are acquainted with these authors need not be told how riches excite pity, contempt, or reproach, whenever they are mentioned; with what numbers of examples the danger of large possessions is illustrated; and how all the powers of reason and eloquence have been exhausted in endeavours to eradicate a desire, which seems to have intrenched itself too strongly in the mind to be driven out, and which, perhaps, had not lost its power, even over those who declaimed against it, but would have broken out in the poet or the

sage, if it had been excited by opportunity, and invigorated by the approximation of its proper object.

Their arguments have been, indeed, so unsuccessful, that I know not whether it can be shewn, that by all the wit and reason which this favourite cause has called forth, a single convert was ever made; that even one man has refused to be rich, when to be rich was in his power, from the conviction of the greater happiness of a narrow fortune; or disburthened himself of wealth when he had tried its inquietudes, merely to enjoy the peace and leisure and security of a mean and unenvied state.

It is true, indeed, that many have neglected opportunities of raising themselves to honours and to wealth, and rejected the kindest offers of fortune: but however their moderation may be boasted by themselves, or admired by such as only view them at a distance, it will be, perhaps, seldom found that they value riches less, but that they dread labour or danger more than others; they are unable to rouse themselves to action, to strain in the race of competition, or to stand the shock of contest; but though they, therefore, decline the toil of climbing, they nevertheless wish themselves aloft, and would willingly enjoy what they dare not seize.

Others have retired from high stations, and voluntarily condemned themselves to privacy and obscurity. But, even these will not afford many occasions of triumph to the philosopher; for they have commonly either quitted that only which they thought themselves unable to hold, and prevented disgrace by resignation; or they have been induced to try new measures by general inconstancy, which always dreams of happiness in novelty, or by a gloomy disposition, which is disgusted in the same degree with every state, and wishes every scene of life to change as soon as it is beheld. Such men found high and low stations equally unable to satisfy the wishes of a distempered mind, and were unable to shelter themselves in the closest retreat from disappointment, solicitude, and misery.

Yet though these admonitions have been thus neglected by those, who either enjoyed riches, or were able to procure them, it is not rashly to be determined that they are altogether without use; for since far the greatest part of mankind must be confined to conditions comparatively mean, and placed in situations from which they naturally look up with envy to the eminences before them, those writers cannot be thought ill employed that have administered remedies to discontent almost universal, by shewing, that what we cannot reach may very well be forborne, that the inequality of distribution, at which we murmur, is for the most part less than it seems, and that the greatness, which we admire at a distance, has much fewer advantages, and much less splendour, when we are suffered to approach it.

It is the business of moralists to detect the frauds of fortune, and to shew that she imposes upon the careless eye, by a quick succession of shadows, which will shrink to nothing in the gripe; that she disguises life in extrinsick ornaments, which serve only for show, and are laid aside in the hours of solitude, and of pleasure; and that when greatness aspires either to felicity or to wisdom, it shakes off those distinctions which dazzle the gazer, and awe the supplicant.

It may be remarked, that they whose condition has not afforded them the light of moral or religious instruction, and who collect all their ideas by their own eyes, and digest them by their own understandings, seem to consider those who are placed in ranks of remote superiority, as almost another and higher species of beings. As themselves have known little other misery than the consequences of want, they are with difficulty persuaded that where there is wealth there can be sorrow, or that those who glitter in dignity, and glide along in affluence, can be acquainted with pains and cares like those which lie heavy upon the rest of mankind.

This prejudice is, indeed, confined to the lowest meanness, and the darkest ignorance; but it is so confined only

because others have been shewn its folly and its falsehood, because it has been opposed in its progress by history and philosophy, and hindered from spreading its infection by powerful preservatives.

The doctrine of the contempt of wealth, though it has not been able to extinguish avarice or ambition, or suppress that reluctance with which a man passes his days in a state of inferiority, must, at least, have made the lower conditions less grating and wearisome, and has consequently contributed to the general security of life, by hindering that fraud and violence, rapine and circumvention, which must have been produced by an unbounded eagerness of wealth, arising from an unshaken conviction that to be rich is to be happy.

Whoever finds himself incited, by some violent impulse of passion, to pursue riches as the chief end of being, must surely be so much alarmed by the successive admonitions of those whose experience and sagacity have recommended them as the guides of mankind, as to stop and consider whether he is about to engage in an undertaking that will reward his toil, and to examine, before he rushes to wealth, through right and wrong, what it will confer when he has acquired it; and this examination will seldom fail to repress his ardour, and retard his violence.

Wealth is nothing in itself, it is not useful but when it departs from us; its value is found only in that which it can purchase, which, if we suppose it put to its best use by those that possess it, seems not much to deserve the desire or envy of a wise man. It is certain that, with regard to corporal enjoyment, money can neither open new avenues to pleasure, nor block up the passages of anguish. Disease and infirmity still continue to torture and enfeeble, perhaps exasperated by luxury, or promoted by softness. With respect to the mind, it has rarely been observed, that wealth contributes much to quicken the discernment, enlarge the capacity, or elevate the imagination; but may, by hiring flattery, or laying diligence asleep, confirm errour, and harden stupidity.

Wealth cannot confer greatness, for nothing can make that great, which the decree of nature has ordained to be little. The bramble may be placed in a hot-bed, but can never become an oak. Even royalty itself is not able to give that dignity which it happens not to find, but oppresses feeble minds, though it may elevate the strong. The world has been governed in the name of kings, whose existence has scarcely been perceived by any real effects beyond their own palaces.

When therefore the desire of wealth is taking hold of the heart, let us look round and see how it operates upon those whose industry or fortune has obtained it. When we find them oppressed with their own abundance, luxurious without pleasure, idle without ease, impatient and querulous in themselves, and despised or hated by the rest of mankind, we shall soon be convinced, that if the real wants of our condition are satisfied, there remains little to be sought with solicitude, or desired with eagerness.

N° 59. TUESDAY, *October* 9, 1750.

Est aliquid fatale malum per verba levare,
Hoc querulam Prognen Halcyonenque facit:
Hoc erat in solo quare Pæantius antro
Voce fatigaret Lemnia saxa sua.
Strangulat inclusus dolor, atque exæstuat intus,
Cogitur et vires multiplicare suas.—OVID.

Complaining oft gives respite to our grief;
From hence the wretched Progne sought relief,
Hence the Pæantian chief his fate deplores,
And vents his sorrow to the Lemnian shores:
In vain by secrecy we would assuage
Our cares; conceal'd they gather tenfold rage.—F. LEWIS.

IT is common to distinguish men by the names of animals which they are supposed to resemble. Thus a hero is frequently termed a lion, and a statesman a fox, an extortioner gains the appellation of vulture, and a fop the title of monkey. There is also among the various anomalies of character, which a survey of the world exhibits,

a species of beings in human form, which may be properly marked out as the screech-owls of mankind.

These screech-owls seem to be settled in an opinion that the great business of life is to complain, and that they were born for no other purpose than to disturb the happiness of others, to lessen the little comforts, and shorten the short pleasures of our condition, by painful remembrances of the past, or melancholy prognosticks of the future; their only care is to crush the rising hope, to damp the kindling transport, and allay the golden hours of gaiety with the hateful dross of grief and suspicion.

To those whose weakness of spirits, or timidity of temper, subjects them to impressions from others, and who are apt to suffer by fascination, and catch the contagion of misery, it is extremely unhappy to live within the compass of a screech-owl's voice; for it will often fill their ears in the hour of dejection, terrify them with apprehensions, which their own thoughts would never have produced, and sadden, by intruded sorrows, the day which might have been passed in amusements or in business; it will burthen the heart with unnecessary discontents, and weaken for a time that love of life which is necessary to the vigorous prosecution of any undertaking.

Though I have, like the rest of mankind, many failings and weaknesses, I have not yet, by either friends or enemies, been charged with superstition; I never count the company which I enter, and I look at the new moon indifferently over either shoulder. I have, like most other philosophers, often heard the cuckoo without money in my pocket, and have been sometimes reproached as foolhardy for not turning down my eyes when a raven flew over my head. I never go home abruptly because a snake crosses my way, nor have any particular dread of a climacterical year; yet I confess that, with all my scorn of old women, and their tales, I consider it as an unhappy day when I happen to be greeted, in the morning, by Suspirius the screech-owl.

I have now known Suspirius fifty-eight years and four

months, and have never yet passed an hour with him in which he has not made some attack upon my quiet. When we were first acquainted, his great topick was the misery of youth without riches; and whenever we walked out together he solaced me with a long enumeration of pleasures, which, as they were beyond the reach of my fortune, were without the verge of my desires, and which I should never have considered as the objects of a wish, had not his unseasonable representations placed them in my sight.

Another of his topicks is the neglect of merit, with which he never fails to amuse every man whom he sees not eminently fortunate. If he meets with a young officer, he always informs him of gentlemen whose personal courage is unquestioned, and whose military skill qualifies them to command armies, that have, notwithstanding all their merit, grown old with subaltern commissions. For a genius in the church, he is always provided with a curacy for life. The lawyer he informs of many men of great parts and deep study, who have never had an opportunity to speak in the courts: And meeting Serenus, the physician, "Ah, doctor," says he, "what a-foot still, when so many blockheads are rattling in their chariots? I told you seven years ago that you would never meet with encouragement, and I hope you will now take more notice, when I tell you that your Greek, and your diligence, and your honesty, will never enable you to live like yonder apothecary, who prescribes to his own shop, and laughs at the physician."

Suspirius has, in his time, intercepted fifteen authors in their way to the stage; persuaded nine-and-thirty merchants to retire from a prosperous trade for fear of bankruptcy, broke off a hundred-and-thirteen matches by prognostications of unhappiness, and enabled the small-pox to kill nineteen ladies, by perpetual alarms of the loss of beauty.

Whenever my evil stars bring us together, he never fails to represent to me the folly of my pursuits, and in-

forms me that we are much older than when we began our acquaintance, that the infirmities of decrepitude are coming fast upon me, that whatever I now get, I shall enjoy but a little time, that fame is to a man tottering on the edge of the grave of very little importance, and that the time is at hand when I ought to look for no other pleasures than a good dinner and an easy chair.

Thus he goes on in his unharmonious strain, displaying present miseries, and foreboding more, νυκτικόραξ ἀεὶ θανατηφόρος, every syllable is loaded with misfortune, and death is always brought nearer to the view. Yet, what always raises my resentment and indignation, I do not perceive that his mournful meditations have much effect upon himself. He talks and has long talked of calamities, without discovering otherwise than by the tone of his voice, that he feels any of the evils which he bewails or threatens, but has the same habit of uttering lamentations, as others of telling stories, and falls into expressions of condolence for past, or apprehension of future mischiefs, as all men studious of their ease have recourse to those subjects upon which they can most fluently or copiously discourse.

It is reported of the Sybarites, that they destroyed all their cocks, that they might dream out their morning dreams without disturbance. Though I would not so far promote effeminacy as to propose the Sybarites for an example, yet since there is no man so corrupt or foolish, but something useful may be learned from him, I could wish that, in imitation of a people not often to be copied, some regulations might be made to exclude screech-owls from all company, as the enemies of mankind, and confine them to some proper receptacle, where they may mingle sighs at leisure, and thicken the gloom of one another.

Thou prophet of evil, says Homer's Agamemnon, *thou never foretellest me good, but the joy of thy heart is to predict misfortunes.* Whoever is of the same temper, might there find the means of indulging his thoughts, and improving his vein of denunciation, and the flock of screech-

owls might hoot together without injury to the rest of the world.

Yet, though I have so little kindness for this dark generation, I am very far from intending to debar the soft and tender mind from the privilege of complaining, when the sigh arises from the desire not of giving pain, but of gaining ease. To hear complaints with patience, even when complaints are vain, is one of the duties of friendship; and though it must be allowed that he suffers most like a hero that hides his grief in silence,

Spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem.

His outward smiles conceal'd his inward smart.—DRYDEN.

yet it cannot be denied, that he who complains acts like a man, like a social being, who looks for help from his fellow-creatures. Pity is to many of the unhappy a source of comfort in hopeless distresses, as it contributes to recommend them to themselves, by proving that they have not lost the regard of others; and Heaven seems to indicate the duty even of barren compassion, by inclining us to weep for evils which we cannot remedy.

N° 60. SATURDAY, *October* 13, 1750.

—Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.—HOR.

Whose works the beautiful and base contain,
Of vice and virtue more instructive rules
Than all the sober sages of the schools.—FRANCIS.

ALL joy or sorrow for the happiness or calamities of others is produced by an act of the imagination, that realizes the event however fictitious, or approximates it however remote, by placing us, for a time, in the condition of him whose fortune we contemplate; so that we feel, while the deception lasts, whatever motions would be excited by the same good or evil happening to ourselves.

Our passions are therefore more strongly moved, in proportion as we can more readily adopt the pains or pleasure proposed to our minds, by recognizing them as once our

own, or considering them as naturally incident to our state of life. It is not easy for the most artful writer to give us an interest in happiness or misery, which we think ourselves never likely to feel, and with which we have never yet been made acquainted. Histories of the downfal of kingdoms, and revolutions of empires, are read with great tranquillity; the imperial tragedy pleases common auditors only by its pomp of ornament, and grandeur of ideas: and the man whose faculties have been engrossed by business, and whose heart never fluttered but at the rise or fall of the stocks, wonders how the attention can be seized, or the affection agitated, by a tale of love.

Those parallel circumstances and kindred images, to which we readily conform our minds, are, above all other writings, to be found in narratives of the lives of particular persons; and therefore no species of writing seems more worthy of cultivation than biography, since none can be more delightful or more useful, none can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interest, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition.

The general and rapid narratives of history, which involve a thousand fortunes in the business of a day, and complicate innumerable incidents in one great transaction, afford few lessons applicable to private life, which derives its comforts and its wretchedness from the right or wrong management of things, which nothing but their frequency makes considerable, *Parva si non fiant quotidie*, says Pliny, and which can have no place in those relations which never descend below the consultation of senates, the motions of armies, and the schemes of conspirators.

I have often thought that there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful. For, not only every man has, in the mighty mass of the world, great numbers in the same condition with himself, to whom his mistakes and miscarriages, escapes and expedients, would be of immediate and apparent use; but there is such a uniformity in the state of man, consi-

dered apart from adventitious and separable decorations and disguises, that there is scarce any possibility of good or ill, but is common to human kind. A great part of the time of those who are placed at the greatest distances by fortune, or by temper, must unavoidably pass in the same manner; and though, when the claims of nature are satisfied, caprice, and vanity, and accident, begin to produce discriminations and peculiarities, yet the eye is not very heedful or quick, which cannot discover the same causes still terminating their influence in the same effects, though sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, or perplexed by multiplied combinations. We are all prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure.

It is frequently objected to relations of particular lives, that they are not distinguished by any striking or wonderful vicissitudes. The scholar who passed his life among his books, the merchant who conducted only his own affairs, the priest, whose sphere of action was not extended beyond that of his duty, are considered as no proper objects of publick regard, however they might have excelled in their several stations, whatever might have been their learning, integrity, and piety. But this notion arises from false measures of excellence and dignity, and must be eradicated by considering, that in the esteem of uncorrupted reason, what is of most use is of most value.

It is, indeed, not improper to take honest advantages of prejudice, and to gain attention by a celebrated name; but the business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents, which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestick privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exteriour appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue. The account of Thuanus is, with great propriety, said by its author to have been written, that it might lay open to posterity the private and familiar character of that man, *cujus ingenium*

et candorem ex ipsius scriptis sunt olim semper miraturi, whose candour and genius will to the end of time be by his writings preserved in admiration.

There are many invisible circumstances which, whether we read as inquirers after natural or moral knowledge, whether we intend to enlarge our science, or increase our virtue, are more important than publick occurrences. Thus Sallust, the great master of nature, has not forgot, in his account of Catiline, to remark that *his walk was now quick, and again slow*, as an indication of a mind revolving something with violent commotion. Thus the story of Melancthon affords a striking lecture on the value of time, by informing us, that when he made an appointment, he expected not only the hour, but the minute to be fixed, that the day might not run out in the idleness of suspence: and all the plans and enterprizes of De Witt are now of less importance to the world, than that part of his personal character, which represents him as *careful of his health, and negligent of his life.*

But biography has often been allotted to writers who seem very little acquainted with the nature of their task, or very negligent about the performance. They rarely afford any other account than might be collected from publick papers, but imagine themselves writing a life when they exhibit a chronological series of actions or preferments; and so little regard the manners or behaviour of their heroes, that more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral.

If now and then they condescend to inform the world of particular facts, they are not always so happy as to select the most important. I know not well what advantage posterity can receive from the only circumstance by which Tickell has distinguished Addison from the rest of mankind, *the irregularity of his pulse:* nor can I think myself overpaid for the time spent in reading the life of Malherb by being enabled to relate after the learned biographer,

that Malherb had two predominant opinions; one, that the looseness of a single woman might destroy all her boast of ancient descent; the other, that the French beggars made use very improperly and barbarously of the phrase *noble gentleman*, because either word included the sense to both.

There are, indeed, some natural reasons why these narratives are often written by such as were not likely to give much instruction or delight, and why most accounts of particular persons are barren and useless. If a life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but must expect little intelligence; for the incidents which give excellence to biography are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition. We know how few can pourtray a living acquaintance, except by his most prominent and observable particularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how much of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a succession of copies will lose all resemblance of the original.

If the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the publick curiosity, there is danger lest his interest, his fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness, overpower his fidelity, and tempt him to conceal, if not to invent. There are many who think it an act of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends, even when they can no longer suffer by their detection; we therefore see whole ranks of characters adorned with uniform panegyrick, and not to be known from one another, but by extrinsick and casual circumstances. "Let me remember," says Hale, "when I find myself inclined to pity a criminal, that there is likewise a pity due to the country." If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth.

N° 61. TUESDAY, *October* 16, 1750.

Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret—
Quem, nisi mendosum et mendacem?—HOR.

False praise can charm, unreal shame controul—
Whom but a vicious or a sickly soul?—FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT is extremely vexatious to a man of eager and thirsty curiosity to be placed at a great distance from the fountain of intelligence, and not only never to receive the current of report till it has satiated the greatest part of the nation, but at last to find it mudded in its course, and corrupted with taints or mixtures from every channel through which it flowed.

One of the chief pleasures of my life is to hear what passes in the world, to know what are the schemes of the politick, the aims of the busy, and the hopes of the ambitious; what changes of publick measures are approaching; who is likely to be crushed in the collision of parties; who is climbing to the top of power, and who is tottering on the precipice of disgrace. But as it is very common for us to desire most what we are least qualified to obtain, I have suffered this appetite of news to outgrow all the gratifications which my present situation can afford it; for being placed in a remote county, I am condemned always to confound the future with the past, to form prognostications of events no longer doubtful, and to consider the expediency of schemes already executed or defeated. I am perplexed with a perpetual deception in my prospects, like a man pointing his telescope at a remote star, which before the light reaches his eye has forsaken the place from which it was emitted.

The mortification of being thus always behind the active world in my reflections and discoveries, is exceedingly aggravated by the petulance of those whose health, or business, or pleasure, brings them hither from London. For, without considering the insuperable disadvantages

of my condition, and the unavoidable ignorance which absence must produce, they often treat me with the utmost superciliousness of contempt, for not knowing what no human sagacity can discover; and sometimes seem to consider me as a wretch scarcely worthy of human converse, when I happen to talk of the fortune of a bankrupt, or propose the healths of the dead; when I warn them of mischiefs already incurred, or wish for measures that have been lately taken. They seem to attribute to the superiority of their intellects what they only owe to the accident of their condition, and think themselves indisputably entitled to airs of insolence and authority, when they find another ignorant of facts, which, because they echoed in the streets of London, they suppose equally publick in all other places, and known where they could neither be seen, related, nor conjectured.

To this haughtiness they are indeed too much encouraged by the respect which they receive amongst us, for no other reason than that they come from London. For no sooner is the arrival of one of these disseminators of knowledge known in the country, than we crowd about him from every quarter, and by innumerable inquiries flatter him into an opinion of his own importance. He sees himself surrounded by multitudes, who propose their doubts, and refer their controversies, to him, as to a being descended from some nobler region, and he grows on a sudden oraculous and infallible, solves all difficulties, and sets all objections at defiance.

There is, in my opinion, great reason for suspecting, that they sometimes take advantage of this reverential modesty, and impose upon rustick understandings with a false show of universal intelligence; for I do not find that they are willing to own themselves ignorant of any thing, or that they dismiss any inquirer with a positive and decisive answer. The court, the city, the park, and exchange, are to those men of unbounded observation equally familiar, and they are alike ready to tell the hour at which stocks will rise, or the ministry be changed.

A short residence at London entitles a man to knowledge, to wit, to politeness, and to a despotick and dictatorial power of prescribing to the rude multitude, whom he condescends to honour with a biennial visit; yet, I know not well upon what motives, I have lately found myself inclined to cavil at this prescription, and to doubt whether it be not, on some occasions, proper to withhold our veneration, till we are more authentically convinced of the merits of the claimant.

It is well remembered here, that about seven years ago, one Frolick, a tall boy, with lank hair, remarkable for stealing eggs, and sucking them, was taken from the school in this parish, and sent up to London to study the law. As he had given amongst us no proofs of a genius designed by nature for extraordinary performances, he was, from the time of his departure, totally forgotten, nor was there any talk of his vices or virtues, his good or his ill fortune, till last summer a report burst upon us, that Mr. Frolick was come down in the first post-chaise which this village had seen, having travelled with such rapidity that one of his postillions had broke his leg, and another narrowly escaped suffocation in a quicksand; but that Mr. Frolick seemed totally unconcerned, for such things were never heeded at London.

Mr. Frolick next day appeared among the gentlemen at their weekly meeting on the bowling-green, and now were seen the effects of a London education. His dress, his language, his ideas, were all new, and he did not much endeavour to conceal his contempt of every thing that differed from the opinions, or practice, of the modish world. He shewed us the deformity of our skirts and sleeves, informed us where hats of the proper size were to be sold, and recommended to us the reformation of a thousand absurdities in our clothes, our cookery, and our conversation. When any of his phrases were unintelligible, he could not suppress the joy of confessed superiority, but frequently delayed the explanation, that he might enjoy his triumph over our barbarity.

When he is pleased to entertain us with a story, he takes care to crowd into it names of streets, squares, and buildings, with which he knows we are unacquainted. The favourite topicks of his discourse are the pranks of drunkards, and the tricks put upon country gentlemen by porters and link-boys. When he is with ladies, he tells them of the innumerable pleasures to which he can introduce them; but never fails to hint how much they will be deficient, at their first arrival, in the knowledge of the town. What it is *to know the town*, he has not indeed hitherto informed us, though there is no phrase so frequent in his mouth, nor any science which he appears to think of so great a value, or so difficult attainment.

But my curiosity has been most engaged by the recital of his own adventures and achievements. I have heard of the union of various characters in single persons, but never met with such a constellation of great qualities as this man's narrative affords. Whatever has distinguished the hero; whatever has elevated the wit; whatever has endeared the lover, are all concentered in Mr. Frolick, whose life has, for seven years, been a regular interchange of intrigues, dangers, and waggeries, and who has distinguished himself in every character that can be feared, envied, or admired.

I question whether all the officers of the royal navy can bring together, from all their journals, a collection of so many wonderful escapes as this man has known upon the Thames, on which he has been a thousand and a thousand times on the point of perishing, sometimes by the terrours of foolish women in the same boat, sometimes by his own acknowledged imprudence in passing the river in the dark, and sometimes by shooting the bridge, under which he has rencountered mountainous waves, and dreadful cataracts.

Nor less has been his temerity by land, nor fewer his hazards. He has reeled with giddiness on the top of the Monument; he has crossed the street amidst the rush of coaches; he has been surrounded by robbers without

number; he has headed parties at the playhouse; he has scaled the windows of every toast, of whatever condition; he has been hunted for whole winters by his rivals; he has slept upon bulks, he has cut chairs, he has bilked coachmen; he has rescued his friends from the bailiffs, has knocked down the constable, has bullied the justice, and performed many other exploits, that have filled the town with wonder and with merriment.

But yet greater is the fame of his understanding than his bravery; for he informs us, that he is, at London, the established arbitrator of all points of honour, and the decisive judge of all performances of genius; that no musical performer is in reputation till the opinion of Frolick has ratified his pretensions; that the theatres suspend their sentence till he begins the clap or hiss, in which all are proud to concur; that no publick entertainment has failed or succeeded, but because he opposed or favoured it; that all controversies at the gaming-table are referred to his determination; that he adjusts the ceremonial at every assembly, and prescribes every fashion of pleasure or of dress.

With every man whose name occurs in the papers of the day, he is intimately acquainted; and there are very few posts, either in the state or army, of which he has not more or less influenced the disposal. He has been very frequently consulted both upon war and peace; but the time is not yet come when the nation shall know how much it is indebted to the genius of Frolick.

Yet, notwithstanding all these declarations, I cannot hitherto persuade myself to see that Mr. Frolick has more wit, or knowledge, or courage, than the rest of mankind, or that any uncommon enlargement of his faculties has happened in the time of his absence. For when he talks on subjects known to the rest of the company, he has no advantage over us, but by catches of interruption, briskness of interrogation, and pertness of contempt; and therefore if he has stunned the world with his name, and gained a place in the first ranks of humanity, I cannot but con-

clude, that either a little understanding confers eminence at London, or that Mr. Frolick thinks us unworthy of the exertion of his powers, or that his faculties are benumbed by rural stupidity, as the magnetic needle loses its animation in the polar climes.

I would not, however, like many hasty philosophers, search after the cause till I am certain of the effect; and therefore I desire to be informed, whether you have yet heard the great name of Mr. Frolick. If he is celebrated by other tongues than his own, I shall willingly propagate his praise; but if he has swelled among us with empty boasts, and honours conferred only by himself, I shall treat him with rustick sincerity, and drive him as an impostor from this part of the kingdom to some region of more credulity. I am, &c.

RURICOLA.

N° 62. SATURDAY, *October* 20, 1750.

Nunc ego Triptolemi cuperem conscendere currus,
Misit in ignotam qui rude semen humum:
Nunc ego Medeæ vellem frænare dracones,
Quos habuit fugiens arva, Corinthe, tua;
Nunc ego jactandas optarem sumere pennas,
Sive tuas, Perseu; Dædale, sive tuas.—OVID.

Now would I mount his car, whose bounteous hand
First sow'd with teeming seed the furrow'd land:
Now to Medæa's dragons fix my reins,
That swiftly bore her from Corinthian plains:
Now on Dædalian waxen pinions stray,
Or those which wafted Perseus on his way.—F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM a young woman of very large fortune, which, if my parents would have been persuaded to comply with the rules and customs of the polite part of mankind, might long since have raised me to the highest honours of the female world; but so strangely have they hitherto contrived to waste my life, that I am now on the borders of

twenty, without having ever danced but at our monthly assembly, or been toasted but among a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, or seen in any company in which it was worth a wish to be distinguished.

My father having impaired his patrimony in soliciting a place at court, at last grew wise enough to cease his pursuit; and, to repair the consequences of expensive attendance and negligence of his affairs, married a lady much older than himself, who had lived in the fashionable world till she was considered as an incumbrance upon parties of pleasure, and as I can collect from incidental informations, retired from gay assemblies just time enough to escape the mortification of universal neglect.

She was, however, still rich, and not yet wrinkled; my father was too distressfully embarrassed to think much on any thing but the means of extrication, and though it is not likely that he wanted the delicacy which polite conversation will always produce in understandings not remarkably defective, yet he was contented with a match, by which he might be set free from inconveniencies, that would have destroyed all the pleasures of imagination, and taken from softness and beauty the power of delighting.

As they were both somewhat disgusted with their treatment in the world, and married, though without any dislike of each other, yet principally for the sake of setting themselves free from dependence on caprice or fashion, they soon retired into the country, and devoted their lives to rural business and diversions.

They had not much reason to regret the change of their situation; for their vanity, which had so long been tormented by neglect and disappointment, was here gratified with every honour that could be paid them. Their long familiarity with publick life made them the oracles of all those who aspired to intelligence or politeness. My father dictated politicks, my mother prescribed the mode, and it was sufficient to entitle any family to some consideration, that they were known to visit at Mrs. Courtly's.

In this state they were, to speak in the style of novelists, made happy by the birth of your correspondent. My parents had no other child, I was therefore not browbeaten by a saucy brother, or lost in a multitude of coheiresses, whose fortunes being equal, would probably have conferred equal merit, and procured equal regard; and as my mother was now old, my understanding and my person had fair play, my inquiries were not checked, my advances towards importance were not repressed, and I was soon suffered to tell my own opinions, and early accustomed to hear my own praises.

By these accidental advantages I was much exalted above the young ladies with whom I conversed, and was treated by them with great deference. I saw none who did not seem to confess my superiority, and to be held in awe by the splendour of my appearance; for the fondness of my father made him pleased to see me dressed, and my mother had no vanity nor expences to hinder her from concurring with his inclination.

Thus, Mr. Rambler, I lived without much desire after any thing beyond the circle of our visits; and here I should have quietly continued to portion out my time among my books, and my needle, and my company, had not my curiosity been every moment excited by the conversation of my parents, who, whenever they sit down to familiar prattle, and endeavour the entertainment of each other, immediately transport themselves to London, and relate some adventure in a hackney-coach, some frolick at a masquerade, some conversation in the Park, or some quarrel at an assembly, display the magnificence of a birth-night, relate the conquests of maids of honour, or give a history of diversions, shows, and entertainments, which I had never known but from their accounts.

I am so well versed in the history of the gay world, that I can relate, with great punctuality, the lives of all the last race of wits and beauties; can enumerate, with exact chronology, the whole succession of celebrated singers, musicians, tragedians, comedians, and harlequins;

can tell to the last twenty years all the changes of fashions; and am, indeed, a complete antiquary with respect to head-dresses, dances, and operas.

You will easily imagine, Mr. Rambler, that I could not hear these narratives, for sixteen years together, without suffering some impression, and wishing myself nearer to those places where every hour brings some new pleasure, and life is diversified with an unexhausted succession of felicity.

I indeed often asked my mother why she left a place which she recollected with so much delight, and why she did not visit London once a year, like some other ladies, and initiate me in the world by showing me its amusements, its grandeur, and its variety. But she always told me that the days which she had seen were such as will never come again; that all diversion is now degenerated, that the conversation of the present age is insipid, that their fashions are unbecoming, their customs absurd, and their morals corrupt; that there is no ray left of the genius which enlightened the times that she remembers; that no one who had seen, or heard, the ancient performers, would be able to bear the bunglers of this despicable age; and that there is now neither politeness, nor pleasure, nor virtue, in the world. She therefore assures me that she consults my happiness by keeping me at home, for I should now find nothing but vexation and disgust, and she should be ashamed to see me pleased with such fopperies and trifles, as take up the thoughts of the present set of young people.

With this answer I was kept quiet for several years, and thought it no great inconvenience to be confined to the country, till last summer a young gentleman and his sister came down to pass a few months with one of our neighbours. They had generally no great regard for the country ladies, but distinguished me by a particular complaisance, and, as we grew intimate, gave me such a detail of the elegance, the splendour, the mirth, the happiness of the town, that I am resolved to be no longer buried in

ignorance and obscurity, but to share with other wits the joy of being admired, and divide with other beauties the empire of the world.

I do not find, Mr. Rambler, upon a deliberate and impartial comparison, that I am excelled by Belinda in beauty, in wit, in judgment, in knowledge, or in any thing, but a kind of gay, lively familiarity, by which she mingles with strangers as with persons long acquainted, and which enables her to display her powers without any obstruction, hesitation, or confusion. Yet she can relate a thousand civilities paid to her in publick, can produce, from a hundred lovers, letters filled with praises, protestations, ecstacies, and despair; has been handed by dukes to her chair; has been the occasion of innumerable quarrels; has paid twenty visits in an afternoon; been invited to six balls in an evening, and been forced to retire to lodgings in the country from the importunity of courtship, and the fatigue of pleasure.

I tell you, Mr. Rambler, I will stay here no longer. I have at last prevailed upon my mother to send me to town, and shall set out in three weeks on the grand expedition. I intend to live in publick, and to crowd into the winter every pleasure which money can purchase, and every honour which beauty can obtain.

But this tedious interval how shall I endure? Cannot you alleviate the misery of delay by some pleasing description of the entertainments of the town? I can read, I can talk, I can think of nothing else; and if you will not sooth my impatience, heighten my ideas, and animate my hopes, you may write for those who have more leisure, but are not to expect any longer the honour of being read by those eyes which are now intent only on conquest and destruction.

RHODOCLIA.

N° 63. TUESDAY, *October* 23, 1750.

——— *Habebat sæpe ducentos,*
Sæpe decem servos; modò reges atque tetrarchas,
Omnia magna loquens: modò, sit mihi mensa tripes, et
Concha salis puri, et toga, quæ defendere frigus,
Quamvis crassa, queat.—HOR.

Now with two hundred slaves he crowds his train;
Now walks with ten. In high and haughty strain
At morn, of kings and governors he prates;
At night,—" A frugal table, O ye fates,
" A little shell the sacred salt to hold,
" And clothes, tho' coarse, to keep me from the cold."—FRANCIS.

IT has been remarked, perhaps, by every writer who has left behind him observations upon life, that no man is pleased with his present state; which proves equally unsatisfactory, says Horace, whether fallen upon by chance, or chosen with deliberation; we are always disgusted with some circumstance or other of our situation, and imagine the condition of others more abundant in blessings, or less exposed to calamities.

This universal discontent has been generally mentioned with great severity of censure, as unreasonable in itself, since of two, equally envious of each other, both cannot have the larger share of happiness, and as tending to darken life with unnecessary gloom, by withdrawing our minds from the contemplation and enjoyment of that happiness which our state affords us, and fixing our attention upon foreign objects, which we only behold to depress ourselves, and increase our misery by injurious comparisons.

When this opinion of the felicity of others predominates in the heart, so as to excite resolutions of obtaining, at whatever price, the condition to which such transcendent privileges are supposed to be annexed; when it bursts into action, and produces fraud, violence, and injustice, it is to be pursued with all the rigour of legal punishments. But while operating only upon the thoughts it disturbs none but him who has happened to admit it,

and, however it may interrupt content, makes no attack on piety or virtue, I cannot think it so far criminal or ridiculous, but that it may deserve some pity, and admit some excuse.

That all are equally happy, or miserable, I suppose none is sufficiently enthusiastical to maintain; because, though we cannot judge of the condition of others, yet every man has found frequent vicissitudes in his own state, and must therefore be convinced that life is susceptible of more or less felicity. What then shall forbid us to endeavour the alteration of that which is capable of being improved, and to grasp at augmentations of good, when we know it possible to be increased, and believe that any particular change of situation will increase it?

If he that finds himself uneasy may reasonably make efforts to rid himself from vexation, all mankind have a sufficient plea for some degree of restlessness, and the fault seems to be little more than too much temerity of conclusion, in favour of something not yet experienced, and too much readiness to believe, that the misery which our own passions and appetites produce, is brought upon us by accidental causes, and external efficients.

It is, indeed, frequently discovered by us, that we complained too hastily of peculiar hardships, and imagined ourselves distinguished by embarrassments, in which other classes of men are equally entangled. We often change a lighter for a greater evil, and wish ourselves restored again to the state from which we thought it desirable to be delivered. But this knowledge, though it is easily gained by the trial, is not always attainable any other way; and that error cannot justly be reproached, which reason could not obviate, nor prudence avoid.

To take a view at once distinct and comprehensive of human life, with all its intricacies of combination, and varieties of connexion, is beyond the power of mortal intelligences. Of the state with which practice has not acquainted us we snatch a glimpse, we discern a point,

and regulate the rest by passion, and by fancy. In this inquiry every favourite prejudice, every innate desire, is busy to deceive us. We are unhappy, at least less happy than our nature seems to admit; we necessarily desire the melioration of our lot; what we desire we very reasonably seek, and what we seek we are naturally eager to believe that we have found. Our confidence is often disappointed, but our reason is not convinced, and there is no man who does not hope for something which he has not, though perhaps his wishes lie unactive, because he foresees the difficulty of attainment: as among the numerous students of Hermetick philosophy, not one appears to have desisted from the task of transmutation, from conviction of its impossibility, but from weariness of toil, or impatience of delay, a broken body, or exhausted fortune.

Irresolution and mutability are often the faults of men, whose views are wide, and whose imagination is vigorous and excursive, because they cannot confine their thoughts within their own boundaries of action, but are continually ranging over all the scenes of human existence, and consequently are often apt to conceive that they fall upon new regions of pleasure, and start new possibilities of happiness. Thus they are busied with a perpetual succession of schemes, and pass their lives in alternate elation and sorrow, for want of that calm and immovable acquiescence in their condition, by which men of slower understandings are fixed for ever to a certain point, or led on in the plain beaten track, which their fathers and grandsires have trod before them.

Of two conditions of life equally inviting to the prospect, that will always have the disadvantage which we have already tried; because the evils which we have felt we cannot extenuate; and though we have, perhaps from nature, the power as well of aggravating the calamity which we fear, as of heightening the blessing we expect, yet in those meditations which we indulge by choice, and which are not forced upon the mind by necessity, we have

always the art of fixing our regard upon the more pleasing images, and suffer hope to dispose the lights by which we look upon futurity.

The good and ill of different modes of life are sometimes so equally opposed, that perhaps no man ever yet made his choice between them upon a full conviction, and adequate knowledge; and therefore fluctuation of will is not more wonderful, when they are proposed to the election, than oscillations of a beam charged with equal weights. The mind no sooner imagines itself determined by some prevalent advantage, than some convenience of equal weight is discovered on the other side, and the resolutions which are suggested by the nicest examination, are often repented as soon as they are taken.

Eumenes, a young man of great abilities, inherited a large estate from a father, long eminent in conspicuous employments. His father, harassed with competitions, and perplexed with multiplicity of business, recommended the quiet of a private station with so much force, that Eumenes for some years resisted every motion of ambitious wishes; but being once provoked by the sight of oppression, which he could not redress, he began to think it the duty of an honest man to enable himself to protect others, and gradually felt a desire of greatness, excited by a thousand projects of advantage to his country. His fortune placed him in the senate, his knowledge and eloquence advanced him at court, and he possessed that authority and influence which he had resolved to exert for the happiness of mankind.

He now became acquainted with greatness, and was in a short time convinced, that in proportion as the power of doing well is enlarged, the temptations to do ill are multiplied and enforced. He felt himself every moment in danger of being either seduced or driven from his honest purposes. Sometimes a friend was to be gratified, and sometimes a rival to be crushed, by means which his conscience could not approve. Sometimes he was forced to comply with the prejudices of the publick, and sometimes

with the schemes of the ministry. He was by degrees wearied with perpetual struggles to unite policy and virtue, and went back to retirement as the shelter of innocence, persuaded that he could only hope to benefit mankind by a blameless example of private virtue. Here he spent some years in tranquillity and beneficence; but finding that corruption increased, and false opinions in government prevailed, he thought himself again summoned to posts of publick trust, from which new evidence of his own weakness again determined him to retire.

Thus men may be made inconstant by virtue and by vice, by too much or too little thought; yet inconstancy, however dignified by its motives, is always to be avoided, because life allows us but a small time for inquiry and experiment, and he that steadily endeavours at excellence, in whatever employment, will more benefit mankind than he that hesitates in choosing his part till he is called to the performance. The traveller that resolutely follows a rough and winding path, will sooner reach the end of his journey, than he that is always changing his direction, and wastes the hours of day-light in looking for smoother ground and shorter passages.

N° 64. SATURDAY, *October* 27, 1750.

Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est.—SALLUST.

To live in friendship is to have the same desires and the same aversions.

WHEN Socrates was building himself a house at Athens, being asked by one that observed the littleness of the design, why a man so eminent would not have an abode more suitable to his dignity? he replied, that he should think himself sufficiently accommodated, if he could see that narrow habitation filled with real friends. Such was the opinion of this great master of human life, concerning the infrequency of such an union of minds as might deserve the name of friendship, that among the multitudes whom vanity or curiosity, civility, or veneration, crowded

about him, he did not expect, that very spacious apartments would be necessary to contain all that should regard him with sincere kindness, or adhere to him with steady fidelity.

So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of friendship, and so many accidents must concur to its rise and continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply its place as they can, with interest and dependance.

Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by perpetual attention to their interest, and unresisting subjection to their passions. Long habits may superinduce inability to deny any desire, or repress, by superior motives, the importunities of any immediate gratification, and an inveterate selfishness will imagine all advantages diminished in proportion as they are communicated.

But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition, not inconsistent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude friendship from the heart. Some ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain, soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity. Others are soft and flexible, easily influenced by reports or whispers, ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest, to follow the opinion of every confident adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath. Some are impatient of contradiction, more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or safer way to the sagacity of another, inclined to consider counsel as insult, and inquiry as want of confidence, and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission, and implicit compliance. Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes; and pleased with producing

effects by invisible means, and shewing their design only in its execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open to every eye, and equally profuse of their own secrets and those of others, without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest arts of prudent integrity, ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery. Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of good purposes and uncorrupted morals, but they are unfit for close and tender intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a friend, whose kindness is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander; he cannot be a useful counsellor who will hear no opinion but his own; he will not much invite confidence whose principal maxim is to suspect; nor can the candour and frankness of that man be much esteemed, who spreads his arms to human kind, and makes every man, without distinction, a denizen of his bosom.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting, there must not only be equal virtue on each part, but virtue of the same kind; not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are often, by superficial accomplishments and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities, and incontestable evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those whom we cannot love. But friendship, compounded of esteem and love, derives from one its tenderness, and its permanence from the other; and therefore requires not only that its candidates should gain the judgment, but that they should attract the affections; that they should not only be firm in the day of distress, but gay in the hour of jollity; not only useful in exigencies, but pleasing in familiar life; their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispel alike the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

To this mutual complacency is generally requisite an uniformity of opinions, at least of those active and conspicuous principles which discriminate parties in govern-

ment, and sects in religion, and which every day operate more or less on the common business of life. For though great tenderness has, perhaps, been sometimes known to continue between men eminent in contrary factions; yet such friends are to be shewn rather as prodigies than examples, and it is no more proper to regulate our conduct by such instances, than to leap a precipice, because some have fallen from it and escaped with life.

It cannot but be extremely difficult to preserve private kindness in the midst of publick opposition, in which will necessarily be involved a thousand incidents, extending their influence to conversation and privacy. Men engaged, by moral or religious motives, in contrary parties, will generally look with different eyes upon every man, and decide almost every question upon different principles. When such occasions of dispute happen, to comply is to betray our cause, and to maintain friendship by ceasing to deserve it; to be silent is to lose the happiness and dignity of independence, to live in perpetual constraint, and to desert, if not to betray: and who shall determine which of two friends shall yield, where neither believes himself mistaken, and both confess the importance of the question? What then remains but contradiction and debate? and from those what can be expected, but acrimony and vehemence, the insolence of triumph, the vexation of defeat, and, in time, a weariness of contest, and an extinction of benevolence? Exchange of endearments and intercourse of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded; but the poison of discord is infused, and though the countenance may preserve its smile, the heart is hardening and contracting.

That man will not be long agreeable, whom we see only in times of seriousness and severity; and therefore to maintain the softness and serenity of benevolence, it is necessary that friends partake each other's pleasures as well as cares, and be led to the same diversions by similitude of taste. This is, however, not to be considered as equally

indispensable with conformity of principles, because any man may honestly, according to the precepts of Horace, resign the gratifications of taste to the humour of another, and friendship may well deserve the sacrifice of pleasure, though not of conscience.

It was once confessed to me, by a painter, that no professor of his art ever loved another. This declaration is so far justified by the knowledge of life, as to damp the hopes of warm and constant friendship, between men whom their studies have made competitors, and whom every favourer and every censurer are hourly inciting against each other. The utmost expectation that experience can warrant, is, that they should forbear open hostilities and secret machinations, and when the whole fraternity is attacked, be able to unite against a common foe. Some, however, though few, may perhaps be found, in whom emulation has not been able to overpower generosity, who are distinguished from lower beings by nobler motives than the love of fame, and can preserve the sacred flame of friendship from the gusts of pride, and the rubbish of interest.

Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration; but commonly take away that easy freedom and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings; the great effect of friendship is beneficence, yet by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty, or repress compassion; for duty is to be preferred before convenience, and he that loses part of the pleasures of friendship by his generosity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conscience.

N° 65. Tuesday, *October* 30, 1750.

——— *Garrit aniles*
Ex re fabellas.———Hor.

The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,
Conceals the moral counsel in a tale.

Obidah, the son of Abensina, left the caravansera early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the valleys, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices: he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring: all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence without suffering its fatigues. He, therefore, still continued to walk for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the musick of the birds whom the heat had assembled in the shade; and sometimes amused himself with plucking the flowers that covered

the banks on either side, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains and murmuring with waterfalls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path, which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might sooth or divert him. He listened to every echo, he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to

find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrours of darkness and solitude surrounded him: the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills,

——— χείμαῤῥοι ποταμοὶ κατ' ὄρεσφι ῥέοντες
Ἐς μισγάγκειαν συμβάλλετον ὄβριμον ὕδωρ,
Τόνδε τε τηλόσε δοῦπον ἐν οὔρεσιν ἔκλυε ποιμήν.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintry show'rs,
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours;
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length, not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled; he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, "Tell me," said the hermit, "by what chance thou hast been brought hither. I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before." Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

"Son," said the hermit, "let the errours and follies, the dangers and escape, of this day sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth, full of vigour and full

of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and with diligence, and travel on awhile in the straight road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to inquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for awhile, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerge ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horrour, with sorrow, with repentance; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return, after all his errours, and that he who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and difficulty

give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose, commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence, and when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life."

N° 66. SATURDAY, *November* 3, 1750.

Pauci dignoscere possunt
Vera bona, atque illis multùm diversa, remotâ
Erroris nebulâ.—JUV.

——— How few
Know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue!
How void of reason are our hopes and fears!—DRYDEN.

THE folly of human wishes and pursuits has always been a standing subject of mirth and declamation, and has been ridiculed and lamented from age to age; till perhaps the fruitless repetition of complaints and censures, may be justly numbered among the subjects of censure and complaint.

Some of these instructors of mankind have not contented themselves with checking the overflows of passion, and lopping the exuberance of desire, but have attempted to destroy the root as well as the branches; and not only to confine the mind within bounds, but to smooth it for ever by a dead calm. They have employed their reason and eloquence to persuade us, that nothing is worth the wish of a wise man, have represented all earthly good and evil as indifferent, and counted among vulgar errours the dread of pain, and the love of life.

It is almost always the unhappiness of a victorious disputant, to destroy his own authority by claiming too many consequences, or diffusing his proposition to an indefensible extent. When we have heated our zeal in a cause, and elated our confidence with success, we are naturally inclined to pursue the same train of reasoning, to establish some collateral truth, to remove some adjacent difficulty, and to take in the whole comprehension of our system: as a prince, in the ardour of acquisition, is willing to secure his first conquest by the addition of another, add fortress to fortress, and city to city, till despair and oppor-

tunity turn his enemies upon him, and he loses in a moment the glory of a reign.

The philosophers having found an easy victory over those desires which we produce in ourselves, and which terminate in some imaginary state of happiness unknown and unattainable, proceeded to make further inroads upon the heart, and attacked at last our senses and our instincts. They continued to war upon nature with arms by which only folly could be conquered; they therefore lost the trophies of their former combats, and were considered no longer with reverence or regard.

Yet it cannot be with justice denied, that these men have been very useful monitors, and have left many proofs of strong reason, deep penetration, and accurate attention to the affairs of life, which it is now our business to separate from the foam of a boiling imagination, and to apply judiciously to our own use. They have shewn that most of the conditions of life, which raise the envy of the timorous, and rouse the ambition of the daring, are empty shows of felicity, which, when they become familiar, lose their power of delighting; and that the most prosperous and exalted have very few advantages over a meaner and more obscure fortune, when their dangers and solicitudes are balanced against their equipage, their banquets, and their palaces.

It is natural for every man uninstructed to murmur at his condition, because, in the general infelicity of life, he feels his own miseries, without knowing that they are common to all the rest of the species; and therefore, though he will not be less sensible of pain by being told that others are equally tormented, he will at least be freed from the temptation of seeking, by perpetual changes, that ease which is no where to be found; and though his disease still continues, he escapes the hazard of exasperating it by remedies.

The gratifications which affluence of wealth, extent of power, and eminence of reputation confer, must be always, by their own nature, confined to a very small number; and

the life of the greater part of mankind must be lost in empty wishes and painful comparisons, were not the balm of philosophy shed upon us, and our discontent at the appearances of an unequal distribution soothed and appeased.

It seemed, perhaps, below the dignity of the great masters of moral learning, to descend to familiar life, and caution mankind against that petty ambition which is known among us by the name of vanity; which yet had been an undertaking not unworthy of the longest beard, and most solemn austerity. For though the passions of little minds, acting in low stations, do not fill the world with bloodshed and devastations, or mark, by great events, the periods of time, yet they torture the breast on which they seize, infest those that are placed within the reach of their influence, destroy private quiet and private virtue, and undermine insensibly the happiness of the world.

The desire of excellence is laudable, but is very frequently ill directed. We fall, by chance, into some class of mankind, and, without consulting nature or wisdom, resolve to gain their regard by those qualities which they happen to esteem. I once knew a man remarkably dim-sighted, who, by conversing much with country gentlemen, found himself irresistibly determined to sylvan honours. His great ambition was to shoot flying, and he therefore spent whole days in the woods pursuing game; which, before he was near enough to see them, his approach frighted away.

When it happens that the desire tends to objects which produce no competition, it may be overlooked with some indulgence, because, however fruitless or absurd, it cannot have ill effects upon the morals. But most of our enjoyments owe their value to the peculiarity of possession, and when they are rated at too high a value, give occasion to stratagems of malignity, and incite opposition, hatred, and defamation. The contest of two rural beauties for preference and distinction, is often sufficiently keen and rancorous to fill their breasts with all those passions, which

are generally thought the curse only of senates, of armies, and of courts; and the rival dancers of an obscure assembly have their partizans and abettors, often not less exasperated against each other, than those who are promoting the interests of rival monarchs.

It is common to consider those whom we find infected with an unreasonable regard for trifling accomplishments, as chargeable with all the consequences of their folly, and as the authors of their own unhappiness: but, perhaps, those whom we thus scorn or detest, have more claim to tenderness than has been yet allowed them. Before we permit our severity to break loose upon any fault or errour, we ought surely to consider how much we have countenanced or promoted it. We see multitudes busy in the pursuit of riches, at the expence of wisdom and of virtue; but we see the rest of mankind approving their conduct, and inciting their eagerness, by paying that regard and deference to wealth, which wisdom and virtue only can deserve. We see women universally jealous of the reputation of their beauty, and frequently look with contempt on the care with which they study their complexions, endeavour to preserve or to supply the bloom of youth, regulate every ornament, twist their hair into curls, and shade their faces from the weather. We recommend the care of their nobler part, and tell them how little addition is made by all their arts to the graces of the mind. But when was it known that female goodness or knowledge was able to attract that officiousness, or inspire that ardour, which beauty produces whenever it appears? And with what hope can we employ our labour to persuade the ladies, that the time spent at the toilet is lost in vanity, when they have every moment some new conviction, that their interest is more effectually promoted by a riband well disposed, than by the brightest act of heroick virtue?

In every instance of vanity it will be found that the blame ought to be shared among more than it generally reaches; all who exalt trifles by immoderate praise, or instigate needless emulation by invidious incitements, are

to be considered as perverters of reason, and corrupters of the world: and since every man is obliged to promote happiness and virtue, he should be careful not to mislead unwary minds, by appearing to set too high a value upon things by which no real excellence is conferred.

N° 67. TUESDAY, *November* 6, 1750.

Αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος.
Καλῶς βλέπουσιν ὄμμασιν, μέλλουσι δέ.—EURIP.

Exiles, the proverb says, subsist on hope.
Delusive hope still points to distant good,
To good that mocks approach.

THERE is no temper so generally indulged as hope: other passions operate by starts on particular occasions, or in certain parts of life; but hope begins with the first power of comparing our actual with our possible state, and attends us through every stage and period, always urging us forward to new acquisitions, and holding out some distant blessing to our view, promising us either relief from pain, or increase of happiness.

Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, of sickness, of captivity, would, without this comfort, be insupportable; nor does it appear that the happiest lot of terrestrial existence can set us above the want of this general blessing; or that life, when the gifts of nature and of fortune are accumulated upon it, would not still be wretched, were it not elevated and delighted by the expectation of some new possession, of some enjoyment yet behind, by which the wish shall be at last satisfied, and the heart filled up to its utmost extent.

Hope is, indeed, very fallacious, and promises what it seldom gives; but its promises are more valuable than the gifts of fortune, and it seldom frustrates us without assuring us of recompencing the delay by a greater bounty.

I was musing on this strange inclination which every man feels to deceive himself, and considering the advantages and dangers proceeding from this gay prospect of

futurity, when, falling asleep, on a sudden I found myself placed in a garden, of which my sight could descry no limits. Every scene about me was gay and gladsome, light with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; the ground was painted with all the variety of spring, and all the choir of nature was singing in the groves. When I had recovered from the first raptures, with which the confusion of pleasure had for a time entranced me, I began to take a particular and deliberate view of this delightful region. I then perceived that I had yet higher gratifications to expect, and that, at a small distance from me, there were brighter flowers, clearer fountains, and more lofty groves, where the birds, which I yet heard but faintly, were exerting all the power of melody. The trees about me were beautiful with verdure, and fragrant with blossoms; but I was tempted to leave them by the sight of ripe fruits, which seemed to hang only to be plucked. I therefore walked hastily forwards, but found, as I proceeded, that the colours of the field faded at my approach, the fruit fell before I reached it, the birds flew still singing before me, and though I pressed onward with great celerity, I was still in sight of pleasures of which I could not yet gain the possession, and which seemed to mock my diligence, and to retire as I advanced.

Though I was confounded with so many alternations of joy and grief, I yet persisted to go forward, in hopes that these fugitive delights would in time be overtaken. At length I saw an innumerable multitude of every age and sex, who seemed all to partake of some general felicity; for every cheek was flushed with confidence, and every eye sparkled with eagerness: yet each appeared to have some particular and secret pleasure, and very few were willing to communicate their intentions, or extend their concern beyond themselves. Most of them seemed, by the rapidity of their motion, too busy to gratify the curiosity of a stranger, and therefore I was content for awhile to gaze upon them, without interrupting them with troublesome inquiries. At last I observed one man worn with

time, and unable to struggle in the crowd; and, therefore, supposing him more at leisure, I began to accost him: but he turned from me with anger, and told me he must not be disturbed, for the great hour of projection was now come when Mercury should lose his wings, and slavery should no longer dig the mine for gold.

I left him, and attempted another, whose softness of mien, and easy movement, gave me reason to hope for a more agreeable reception: but he told me, with a low bow, that nothing would make him more happy than an opportunity of serving me, which he could not now want, for a place which he had been twenty years soliciting would be soon vacant. From him I had recourse to the next, who was departing in haste to take possession of the estate of an uncle, who by the course of nature could not live long. He that followed was preparing to dive for treasure in a new-invented bell; and another was on the point of discovering the longitude.

Being thus rejected wheresoever I applied myself for information, I began to imagine it best to desist from inquiry, and try what my own observation would discover: but seeing a young man, gay and thoughtless, I resolved upon one more experiment, and was informed that I was in the garden of HOPE, the daughter of DESIRE, and that all those whom I saw thus tumultuously bustling round me were incited by the promises of HOPE, and hastening to seize the gifts which she held in her hand.

I turned my sight upward, and saw a goddess in the bloom of youth sitting on a throne: around her lay all the gifts of fortune, and all the blessings of life were spread abroad to view; she had a perpetual gaiety of aspect, and every one imagined that her smile, which was impartial and general, was directed to himself, and triumphed in his own superiority to others, who had conceived the same confidence from the same mistake.

I then mounted an eminence, from which I had a more extensive view of the whole place, and could with less perplexity consider the different conduct of the crowds

that filled it. From this station I observed, that the entrance into the garden of HOPE was by two gates, one of which was kept by REASON, and the other by FANCY. REASON was surly and scrupulous, and seldom turned the key without many interrogatories, and long hesitation; but FANCY was a kind and gentle portress, she held her gate wide open, and welcomed all equally to the district under her superintendency; so that the passage was crowded by all those who either feared the examination of REASON, or had been rejected by her.

From the gate of REASON there was a way to the throne of HOPE, by a craggy, slippery, and winding path, called the *Streight of Difficulty*, which those who entered with the permission of the guard endeavoured to climb. But though they surveyed the way very carefully before they began to rise, and marked out the several stages of their progress, they commonly found unexpected obstacles, and were obliged frequently to stop on the sudden, where they imagined the way plain and even. A thousand intricacies embarrassed them, a thousand slips threw them back, and a thousand pitfalls impeded their advance. So formidable were the dangers, and so frequent the miscarriages, that many returned from the first attempt, and many fainted in the midst of the way, and only a very small number were led up to the summit of HOPE, by the hand of FORTITUDE. Of these few the greater part, when they had obtained the gift which HOPE had promised them, regretted the labour which it cost, and felt in their success the regret of disappointment; the rest retired with their prize, and were led by WISDOM to the bowers of CONTENT.

Turning then towards the gate of FANCY, I could find no way to the seat of HOPE; but though she sat full in view, and held out her gifts with an air of invitation, which filled every heart with rapture, the mountain was, on that side, inaccessibly steep, but so channelled and shaded, that none perceived the impossibility of ascending it, but each imagined himself to have discovered a way to

which the rest were strangers. Many expedients were indeed tried by this industrious tribe, of whom some were making themselves wings, which others were contriving to actuate by the perpetual motion. But with all their labour, and all their artifices, they never rose above the ground, or quickly fell back, nor ever approached the throne of HOPE, but continued still to gaze at a distance, and laughed at the slow progress of those whom they saw toiling in the *Streight of Difficulty*.

Part of the favourites of FANCY, when they had entered the garden, without making, like the rest, an attempt to climb the mountain, turned immediately to the vale of IDLENESS, a calm and undisturbed retirement, from whence they could always have HOPE in prospect, and to which they pleased themselves with believing that she intended speedily to descend. These were indeed scorned by all the rest; but they seemed very little affected by contempt, advice, or reproof, but were resolved to expect at ease the favour of the goddess.

Among this gay race I was wandering, and found them ready to answer all my questions, and willing to communicate their mirth; but turning round, I saw two dreadful monsters entering the vale, one of whom I knew to be AGE, and the other WANT. Sport and revelling were now at an end, and an universal shriek of affright and distress burst out and awaked me.

N° 68. SATURDAY, *November* 10, 1750.

Vivendum rectè, cùm propter plurima, tunc his
Præcipuè causis, ut linguas mancipiorum
Contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima servi.—JUV.

Let us live well: were it alone for this
The baneful tongues of servants to despise:
Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds
An easy entrance to ignoble minds.—HERVEY.

THE younger Pliny very justly observed, that of actions that deserve our attention, the most splendid are not always the greatest. Fame, and wonder, and applause, are not

excited but by external and adventitious circumstances, often distinct and separate from virtue and heroism. Eminence of station, greatness of effect, and all the favours of fortune, must concur to place excellence in publick view; but fortitude, diligence, and patience, divested of their show, glide unobserved through the crowd of life, and suffer and act, though with the same vigour and constancy, yet without pity and without praise.

This remark may be extended to all parts of life. Nothing is to be estimated by its effect upon common eyes and common ears. A thousand miseries make silent and invisible inroads on mankind, and the heart feels innumerable throbs, which never break into complaint. Perhaps, likewise, our pleasures are for the most part equally secret, and most are borne up by some private satisfaction, some internal consciousness, some latent hope, some peculiar prospect, which they never communicate, but reserve for solitary hours, and clandestine meditation.

The main of life is, indeed, composed of small incidents and petty occurrences; of wishes for objects not remote, and grief for disappointments of no fatal consequence; of insect vexations, which sting us and fly away, impertinences which buzz awhile about us, and are heard no more; of meteorous pleasures which dance before us and are dissipated; of compliments which glide off the soul like other musick, and are forgotten by him that gave, and him that received them.

Such is the general heap out of which every man is to cull his own condition: for, as the chemist tells us, that all bodies are resolvable into the same elements, and that the boundless variety of things arises from the different proportions of very few ingredients; so a few pains and a few pleasures are all the materials of human life, and of these the proportions are partly allotted by Providence, and partly left to the arrangement of reason and of choice.

As these are well or ill disposed, man is for the most part happy or miserable. For very few are involved in

great events, or have their thread of life entwisted with the chain of causes on which armies or nations are suspended; and even those who seem wholly busied in publick affairs, and elevated above low cares, or trivial pleasures, pass the chief part of their time in familiar and domestick scenes; from these they came into publick life, to these they are every hour recalled by passions not to be suppressed; in these they have the reward of their toils, and to these at last they retire.

The great end of prudence is to give cheerfulness to those hours, which splendour cannot gild, and acclamation cannot exhilarate; those soft intervals of unbended amusement, in which a man shrinks to his natural dimensions, and throws aside the ornaments or disguises, which he feels in privacy to be useless incumbrances, and to lose all effect when they become familiar. To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprize and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution.

It is, indeed, at home that every man must be known by those who would make a just estimate either of his virtue or felicity; for smiles and embroidery are alike occasional, and the mind is often dressed for show in painted honour and fictitious benevolence.

Every man must have found some whose lives, in every house but their own, was a continual series of hypocrisy, and who concealed under fair appearances bad qualities, which, whenever they thought themselves out of the reach of censure, broke out from their restraint, like winds imprisoned in their caverns, and whom every one had reason to love, but they whose love a wise man is chiefly solicitous to procure. And there are others who, without any show of general goodness, and without the attractions by which popularity is conciliated, are received among their own families as bestowers of happiness, and reverenced as instructors, guardians, and benefactors.

The most authentick witnesses of any man's character are those who know him in his own family, and see him

without any restraint or rule of conduct, but such as he voluntarily prescribes to himself. If a man carries virtue with him into his private apartments, and takes no advantage of unlimited power or probable secrecy; if we trace him through the round of his time, and find that his character, with those allowances which mortal frailty must always want, is uniform and regular, we have all the evidence of his sincerity that one man can have with regard to another: and, indeed, as hypocrisy cannot be its own reward, we may, without hesitation, determine that his heart is pure.

The highest panegyrick, therefore, that private virtue can receive, is the praise of servants. For, however vanity or insolence may look down with contempt on the suffrage of men undignified by wealth, and unenlightened by education, it very seldom happens that they commend or blame without justice. Vice and virtue are easily distinguished. Oppression, according to Harrington's aphorism, will be felt by those that cannot see it; and, perhaps, it falls out very often that, in moral questions, the philosophers in the gown, and in the livery, differ not so much in their sentiments, as in their language, and have equal power of discerning right, though they cannot point it out to others with equal address.

There are very few faults to be committed in solitude, or without some agents, partners, confederates, or witnesses; and, therefore, the servant must commonly know the secrets of a master, who has any secrets to entrust; and failings, merely personal, are so frequently exposed by that security which pride and folly generally produce, and so inquisitively watched by that desire of reducing the inequalities of condition, which the lower orders of the world will always feel, that the testimony of a menial domestick can seldom be considered as defective for want of knowledge. And though its impartiality may be sometimes suspected, it is at least as credible as that of equals, where rivalry instigates censure, or friendship dictates palliations.

The danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them, may be justly considered as one motive to a regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hateful or despicable, than his who has put himself in the power of his servant: in the power of him whom, perhaps, he has first corrupted by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he therefore cannot enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. It is seldom known that authority thus acquired, is possessed without insolence, or that the master is not forced to confess by his tameness or forbearance, that he has enslaved himself by some foolish confidence. And his crime is equally punished, whatever part he takes of the choice to which he is reduced; and he is from that fatal hour, in which he sacrificed his dignity to his passions, in perpetual dread of insolence or defamation; of a controuler at home, or an accuser abroad. He is condemned to purchase, by continual bribes, that secrecy which bribes never secured, and which, after a long course of submission, promises, and anxieties, he will find violated in a fit of rage, or in a frolick of drunkenness.

To dread no eye, and to suspect no tongue, is the great prerogative of innocence; an exemption granted only to invariable virtue. But, guilt has always its horrours and solicitudes; and to make it yet more shameful and detestable, it is doomed often to stand in awe of those, to whom nothing could give influence or weight, but their power of betraying.

N° 69. TUESDAY, *November* 13, 1750.

Flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,
Tyndaris; et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit.
Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas,
Omnia destruitis: vitiataque dentibus ævi
Paulatim lentâ consumitis omnia morte.— OVID.

The dreadful wrinkles when poor Helen spy'd,
Ah! why this second rape? with tears she cry'd,
Time, thou devourer, and thou, envious age,
Who all destroy with keen corroding rage,
Beneath your jaws, whate'er have pleas'd or please,
Must sink, consum'd by swift or slow degrees.—ELPHINSTON.

AN old Greek epigrammatist, intending to shew the miseries that attend the last stage of man, imprecates upon those who are so foolish as to wish for long life, the calamity of continuing to grow old from century to century. He thought that no adventitious or foreign pain was requisite; that decrepitude itself was an epitome of whatever is dreadful; and nothing could be added to the curse of age, but that it should be extended beyond its natural limits.

The most indifferent or negligent spectator can indeed scarcely retire without heaviness of heart, from a view of the last scenes of the tragedy of life, in which he finds those who, in the former parts of the drama, were distinguished by opposition of conduct, contrariety of designs, and dissimilitude of personal qualities, all involved in one common distress, and all struggling with affliction which they cannot hope to overcome.

The other miseries, which waylay our passage through the world, wisdom may escape, and fortitude may conquer: by caution and circumspection we may steal along with very little to obstruct or incommode us; by spirit and vigour we may force a way, and reward the vexation of contest by the pleasures of victory. But a time must come when our policy and bravery shall be equally useless; when we shall all sink into helplessness and sadness, without any power of receiving solace from the pleasures that have formerly delighted us, or any prospect of emer-

ging into a second possession of the blessings that we have lost.

The industry of man has, indeed, not been wanting in endeavours to procure comforts for these hours of dejection and melancholy, and to gild the dreadful gloom with artificial light. The most usual support of old age is wealth. He whose possessions are large, and whose chests are full, imagines himself always fortified against invasions on his authority. If he has lost all other means of government, if his strength and his reason fail him, he can at last alter his will; and therefore all that have hopes must likewise have fears, and he may still continue to give laws to such as have not ceased to regard their own interest.

This is, indeed, too frequently the citadel of the dotard, the last fortress to which age retires, and in which he makes the stand against the upstart race that seizes his domains, disputes his commands, and cancels his prescriptions. But here, though there may be safety, there is no pleasure; and what remains is but a proof that more was once possessed.

Nothing seems to have been more universally dreaded by the ancients than orbity, or want of children; and, indeed, to a man who has survived all the companions of his youth, all who have participated his pleasures and his cares, have been engaged in the same events, and filled their minds with the same conceptions, this full-peopled world is a dismal solitude. He stands forlorn and silent, neglected or insulted, in the midst of multitudes, animated with hopes which he cannot share, and employed in business which he is no longer able to forward or retard; nor can he find any to whom his life or his death are of importance, unless he has secured some domestick gratifications, some tender employments, and endeared himself to some whose interest and gratitude may unite them to him.

So different are the colours of life as we look forward to the future, or backward to the past; and so different the opinions and sentiments which this contrariety of ap-

pearance naturally produces, that the conversation of the old and young ends generally with contempt or pity on either side. To a young man entering the world with fulness of hope, and ardour of pursuit, nothing is so unpleasing as the cold caution, the faint expectations, the scrupulous diffidence, which experience and disappointments certainly infuse; and the old man wonders in his turn that the world never can grow wiser, that neither precepts, nor testimonies, can cure boys of their credulity and sufficiency; and that not one can be convinced that snares are laid for him, till he finds himself entangled.

Thus one generation is always the scorn and wonder of the other, and the notions of the old and young are like liquors of different gravity and texture which never can unite. The spirits of youth sublimed by health, and volatilized by passion, soon leave behind them the phlegmatick sediment of weariness and deliberation, and burst out in temerity and enterprize. The tenderness therefore which nature infuses, and which long habits of beneficence confirm, is necessary to reconcile such opposition; and an old man must be a father to bear with patience those follies and absurdities which he will perpetually imagine himself to find in the schemes and expectations, the pleasures and the sorrows, of those who have not yet been hardened by time, and chilled by frustration.

Yet it may be doubted, whether the pleasure of seeing children ripening into strength, be not overbalanced by the pain of seeing some fall in the blossom, and others blasted in their growth; some shaken down with storms, some tainted with cankers, and some shrivelled in the shade; and whether he that extends his care beyond himself, does not multiply his anxieties more than his pleasures, and weary himself to no purpose, by superintending what he cannot regulate.

But, though age be to every order of human beings sufficiently terrible, it is particularly to be dreaded by fine ladies, who have had no other end or ambition than to fill up the day and the night with dress, diversions,

and flattery, and who, having made no acquaintance with knowledge, or with business, have constantly caught all their ideas from the current prattle of the hour, and been indebted for all their happiness to compliments and treats. With these ladies age begins early, and very often lasts long; it begins when their beauty fades, when their mirth loses its sprightliness, and their motion its ease. From that time all which gave them joy vanishes from about them; they hear the praises bestowed on others, which used to swell their bosoms with exultation. They visit the seats of felicity, and endeavour to continue the habit of being delighted. But pleasure is only received when we believe that we give it in return. Neglect and petulance inform them that their power and their value are past; and what then remains but a tedious and comfortless uniformity of time, without any motion of the heart, or exercise of the reason?

Yet, however age may discourage us by its appearance from considering it in prospect, we shall all by degrees certainly be old; and therefore we ought to inquire what provision can be made against that time of distress? what happiness can be stored up against the winter of life? and how we may pass our latter years with serenity and cheerfulness?

If it has been found by the experience of mankind, that not even the best seasons of life are able to supply sufficient gratifications, without anticipating uncertain felicities, it cannot surely be supposed that old age, worn with labours, harassed with anxieties, and tortured with diseases, should have any gladness of its own, or feel any satisfaction from the contemplation of the present. All the comfort that can now be expected must be recalled from the past, or borrowed from the future; the past is very soon exhausted, all the events or actions of which the memory can afford pleasure are quickly recollected; and the future lies beyond the grave, where it can be reached only by virtue and devotion.

Piety is the only proper and adequate relief of decaying

man. He that grows old without religious hopes, as he declines into imbecility, and feels pains and sorrows incessantly crowding upon him, falls into a gulph of bottomless misery, in which every reflection must plunge him deeper, and where he finds only new gradations of anguish, and precipices of horrour.

N° 70. SATURDAY, *November* 17, 1750.

——— *Argentea proles,*
Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior ære.—OVID.

Succeeding times a silver age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold.—DRYDEN.

HESIOD, in his celebrated distribution of mankind, divides them into three orders of intellect. "The first place," says he, "belongs to him that can by his own powers discern what is right and fit, and penetrate to the remoter motives of action. The second is claimed by him that is willing to hear instruction, and can perceive right and wrong when they are shewn him by another; but he that has neither acuteness nor docility, who can neither find the way by himself, nor will be led by others, is a wretch without use or value."

If we survey the moral world, it will be found, that the same division may be made of men, with regard to their virtue. There are some whose principles are so firmly fixed, whose conviction is so constantly present to their minds, and who have raised in themselves such ardent wishes for the approbation of God, and the happiness with which he has promised to reward obedience and perseverance, that they rise above all other cares and considerations, and uniformly examine every action and desire, by comparing it with the divine commands. There are others in a kind of equipoise between good and ill; who are moved on the one part by riches or pleasure, by the gratifications of passion and the delights of sense; and, on the

other, by laws of which they own the obligation, and rewards of which they believe the reality, and whom a very small addition of weight turns either way. The third class consists of beings immersed in pleasure, or abandoned to passion, without any desire of higher good, or any effort to extend their thoughts beyond immediate and gross satisfactions.

The second class is so much the most numerous, that it may be considered as comprising the whole body of mankind. Those of the last are not very many, and those of the first are very few; and neither the one nor the other fall much under the consideration of the moralists, whose precepts are intended chiefly for those who are endeavouring to go forward up the steeps of virtue, not for those who have already reached the summit, or those who are resolved to stay for ever in their present situation.

To a man not versed in the living world, but accustomed to judge only by speculative reason, it is scarcely credible that any one should be in this state of indifference, or stand undetermined and unengaged, ready to follow the first call to either side. It seems certain, that either a man must believe that virtue will make him happy, and resolve therefore to be virtuous, or think that he may be happy without virtue, and therefore cast off all care but for his present interest. It seems impossible that conviction should be on one side, and practice on the other; and that he who has seen the right way should voluntarily shut his eyes, that he may quit it with more tranquillity. Yet all these absurdities are every hour to be found; the wisest and best men deviate from known and acknowledged duties, by inadvertency or surprize; and most are good no longer than while temptation is away, than while their passions are without excitements, and their opinions are free from the counteraction of any other motive.

Among the sentiments which almost every man changes as he advances into years, is the expectation of uniformity of character. He that without acquaintance with the power of desire, the cogency of distress, the complications of affairs, or the force of partial influence, has filled his

mind with the excellence of virtue, and, having never tried his resolution in any encounters with hope or fear, believes it able to stand firm whatever shall oppose it, will be always clamorous against the smallest failure, ready to exact the utmost punctualities of right, and to consider every man that fails in any part of his duty, as without conscience and without merit; unworthy of trust or love, of pity or regard; as an enemy whom all should join to drive out of society, as a pest which all should avoid, or as a weed which all should trample.

It is not but by experience, that we are taught the possibility of retaining some virtues, and rejecting others, or of being good or bad to a particular degree. For it is very easy to the solitary reasoner, to prove that the same arguments by which the mind is fortified against one crime are of equal force against all, and the consequence very naturally follows, that he whom they fail to move on any occasion, has either never considered them, or has by some fallacy taught himself to evade their validity; and that, therefore, when a man is known to be guilty of one crime, no farther evidence is needful of his depravity and corruption.

Yet such is the state of all mortal virtue, that it is always uncertain and variable, sometimes extending to the whole compass of duty, and sometimes shrinking into a narrow space, and fortifying only a few avenues of the heart, while all the rest is left open to the incursions of appetite, or given up to the dominion of wickedness. Nothing therefore is more unjust than to judge of man by too short an acquaintance, and too slight inspection; for it often happens, that in the loose, and thoughtless, and dissipated, there is a secret radical worth, which may shoot out by proper cultivation; that the spark of heaven, though dimmed and obstructed, is yet not extinguished, but may, by the breath of counsel and exhortation, be kindled into flame.

To imagine that every one who is not completely good is irrecoverably abandoned, is to suppose that all are capable of the same degree of excellence; it is indeed to

exact from all that perfection which none ever can attain. And since the purest virtue is consistent with some vice, and the virtue of the greatest number with almost an equal proportion of contrary qualities, let none too hastily conclude, that all goodness is lost, though it may for a time be clouded and overwhelmed; for most minds are the slaves of external circumstances, and conform to any hand that undertakes to mould them, roll down any torrent of custom in which they happen to be caught, or bend to any importunity that bears hard against them.

It may be particularly observed of women, that they are for the most part good or bad, as they fall among those who practise vice or virtue; and that neither education nor reason gives them much security against the influence of example. Whether it be that they have less courage to stand against opposition, or that their desire of admiration makes them sacrifice their principles to the poor pleasure of worthless praise, it is certain, whatever be the cause, that female goodness seldom keeps its ground against laughter, flattery, or fashion.

For this reason, every one should consider himself as entrusted, not only with his own conduct, but with that of others; and as accountable, not only for the duties which he neglects, or the crimes that he commits, but for that negligence and irregularity which he may encourage or inculcate. Every man, in whatever station, has, or endeavours to have, his followers, admirers, and imitators, and has therefore the influence of his example to watch with care; he ought to avoid not only crimes, but the appearance of crimes, and not only to practise virtue, but to applaud, countenance, and support it. For it is possible that for want of attention, we may teach others faults from which ourselves are free, or, by a cowardly desertion of a cause which we ourselves approve, may pervert those who fix their eyes upon us, and having no rule of their own to guide their course, are easily misled by the aberrations of that example which they choose for their direction.

N° 71. TUESDAY, *November* 20, 1750.

Vivere quod propero pauper, nec inutilis annis,
Da veniam; properat vivere nemo satis.—MART.

True, sir, to live I haste, your pardon give,
For tell me, who makes haste enough to live?—F. LEWIS.

MANY words and sentences are so frequently heard in the mouths of men, that a superficial observer is inclined to believe, that they must contain some primary principle, some great rule of action, which it is proper always to have present to the attention, and by which the use of every hour is to be adjusted. Yet, if we consider the the conduct of those sententious philosophers, it will often be found, that they repeat these aphorisms, merely because they have somewhere heard them, because they have nothing else to say, or because they think veneration gained by such appearances of wisdom, but that no ideas are annexed to the words; and that, according to the old blunder of the followers of Aristotle, their souls are mere pipes or organs, which transmit sounds, but do not understand them.

Of this kind is the well-known and well-attested position, that *life is short*, which may be heard among mankind by an attentive auditor, many times a day, but which never yet within my reach of observation left any impression upon the mind; and perhaps, if my readers will turn their thoughts back upon their old friends, they will find it difficult to call a single man to remembrance, who appeared to know that life was short till he was about to lose it.

It is observable that Horace, in his account of the characters of men, as they are diversified by the various influence of time, remarks, that the old man is *dilator, spe longus*, given to procrastination, and inclined to extend his hopes to a great distance. So far are we generally from thinking what we often say of the shortness of life, that at the time when it is necessarily shortest, we form

projects which we delay to execute, indulge such expectations as nothing but a long train of events can gratify, and suffer those passions to gain upon us, which are only excusable in the prime of life.

These reflections were lately excited in my mind, by an evening's conversation with my friend Prospero, who, at the age of fifty-five, has bought an estate, and is now contriving to dispose and cultivate it with uncommon elegance. His great pleasure is to walk among stately trees, and lie musing in the heat of noon under their shade; he is therefore maturely considering how he shall dispose his walks and his groves, and has at last determined to send for the best plans from Italy, and forbear planting till the next season.

Thus is life trifled away in preparations to do what never can be done, if it be left unattempted till all the requisites which imagination can suggest are gathered together. Where our design terminates only in our own satisfaction, the mistake is of no great importance; for the pleasure of expecting enjoyment is often greater than that of obtaining it, and the completion of almost every wish is found a disappointment; but when many others are interested in an undertaking, when any design is formed, in which the improvement or security of mankind is involved, nothing is more unworthy either of wisdom or benevolence, than to delay it from time to time, or to forget how much every day that passes over us takes away from our power, and how soon an idle purpose to do an action, sinks into a mournful wish that it had once been done.

We are frequently importuned, by the bacchanalian writers, to lay hold on the present hour, to catch the pleasures within our reach, and remember that futurity is not at our command.

> Τὸ ῥόδον ἀκμάζει βαιὸν χρόνον· ἢν δὲ παρέλθῃς,
> Ζητῶν εὑρήσεις οὐ ῥόδον, ἀλλὰ βάτον.
>
> Soon fades the rose; once past the fragrant hour,
> The loiterer finds a bramble for a flow'r.

But surely these exhortations may, with equal propriety

be applied to better purposes; it may be at least inculcated that pleasures are more safely postponed than virtues, and that greater loss is suffered by missing an opportunity of doing good, than an hour of giddy frolick and noisy merriment.

When Baxter had lost a thousand pounds, which he had laid up for the erection of a school, he used frequently to mention the misfortune as an incitement to be charitable while God gives the power of bestowing, and considered himself as culpable in some degree for having left a good action in the hands of chance, and suffered his benevolence to be defeated for want of quickness and diligence.

It is lamented by Hearne, the learned antiquary of Oxford, that this general forgetfulness of the fragility of life, has remarkably infected the students of monuments and records; as their employment consists first in collecting, and afterwards in arranging or abstracting what libraries afford them, they ought to amass no more than they can digest; but when they have undertaken a work, they go on searching and transcribing, call for new supplies, when they are already overburthened, and at last leave their work unfinished. *It is*, says he, *the business of a good antiquary, as of a good man, to have mortality always before him.*

Thus, not only in the slumber of sloth, but in the dissipation of ill-directed industry, is the shortness of life generally forgotten. As some men lose their hours in laziness, because they suppose, that there is time enough for the reparation of neglect; others busy themselves in providing that no length of life may want employment; and it often happens, that sluggishness and activity are equally surprised by the last summons, and perish not more differently from each other, than the fowl that received the shot in her flight, from her that is killed upon the bush.

Among the many improvements made by the last centuries in human knowledge, may be numbered the exact

calculations of the value of life; but whatever may be their use in traffick, they seem very little to have advanced morality. They have hitherto been rather applied to the acquisition of money, than of wisdom; the computer refers none of his calculations to his own tenure, but persists, in contempt of probability, to foretel old age to himself, and believes that he is marked out to reach the utmost verge of human existence, and see thousands and ten thousands fall into the grave.

So deeply is this fallacy rooted in the heart, and so strongly guarded by hope and fear against the approach of reason, that neither science nor experience can shake it, and we act as if life were without end, though we see and confess its uncertainty and shortness.

Divines have, with great strength and ardour, shewn the absurdity of delaying reformation and repentance; a degree of folly, indeed, which sets eternity to hazard. It is the same weakness, in proportion to the importance of the neglect, to transfer any care, which now claims our attention, to a future time; we subject ourselves to needless dangers from accidents which early diligence would have obviated, or perplex our minds by vain precautions, and make provision for the execution of designs, of which the opportunity once missed never will return.

As he that lives longest lives but a little while, every man may be certain that he has no time to waste. The duties of life are commensurate to its duration, and every day brings its task, which if neglected is doubled on the morrow. But he that has already trifled away those months and years, in which he should have laboured, must remember that he has now only a part of that of which the whole is little; and that since the few moments remaining are to be considered as the last trust of heaven, not one is to be lost.

N° 72. SATURDAY, *November* 24, 1750.

Omnis Aristippum decuit status, et color, et res,
Tentantem majora, ferè presentibus æquum.—HOR.

Yet Aristippus ev'ry dress became,
In ev'ry various change of life the same;
And though he aim'd at things of higher kind,
Yet to the present held an equal mind.—FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOSE who exalt themselves into the chair of instruction, without enquiring whether any will submit to their authority, have not sufficiently considered how much of human life passes in little incidents, cursory conversation, slight business, and casual amusements; and therefore they have endeavoured only to inculcate the more awful virtues, without condescending to regard those petty qualities, which grow important only by their frequency, and which, though they produce no single acts of heroism, nor astonish us by great events, yet are every moment exerting their influence upon us, and make the draught of life sweet or bittter by imperceptible instillations. They operate unseen and unregarded, as change of air makes us sick or healthy, though we breathe it without attention, and only know the particles that impregnate it by their salutary or malignant effects.

You have shewn yourself not ignorant of the value of those subaltern endowments, yet have hitherto neglected to recommend good humour to the world, though a little reflection will shew you that it is the *balm of being*, the quality to which all that adorns or elevates mankind must owe its power of pleasing. Without good-humour, learning and bravery can only confer that superiority which swells the heart of the lion in the desert, where he roars without reply, and ravages without resistance. Without good-humour, virtue may awe by its dignity, and amaze by its brightness; but must always be viewed at

a distance, and will scarcely gain a friend or attract an imitator.

Good-humour may be defined a habit of being pleased; a constant and perennial softness of manner, easiness of approach, and suavity of disposition; like that which every man perceives in himself, when the first transports of new felicity have subsided, and his thoughts are only kept in motion by a slow succession of soft impulses. Good-humour is a state between gaiety and unconcern; the act or emanation of a mind at leisure to regard the gratification of another.

It is imagined by many, that whenever they aspire to please, they are required to be merry, and to shew the gladness of their souls by flights of pleasantry, and bursts of laughter. But though these men may be for a time heard with applause and admiration, they seldom delight us long. We enjoy them a little, and then retire to easiness and good-humour, as the eye gazes awhile on eminences glittering with the sun, but soon turns aching away to verdure and to flowers.

Gaiety is to good-humour as animal perfumes to vegetable fragrance; the one overpowers weak spirits, and the other recreates and revives them. Gaiety seldom fails to give some pain; the hearers either strain their faculties to accompany its towerings, or are left behind in envy and despair. Good-humour boasts no faculties which every one does not believe in his own power, and pleases principally by not offending.

It is well known that the most certain way to give any man pleasure, is to persuade him that you receive pleasure from him, to encourage him to freedom and confidence, and to avoid any such appearance of superiority as may overbear and depress him. We see many that by this art only spend their days in the midst of caresses, invitations, and civilities; and without any extraordinary qualities or attainments, are the universal favourites of both sexes, and certainly find a friend in every place. The darlings of the world will, indeed, be generally found

such as excite neither jealousy nor fear, and are not considered as candidates for any eminent degree of reputation, but content themselves with common accomplishments, and endeavour rather to solicit kindness than to raise esteem; therefore in assemblies and places of resort it seldom fails to happen, that though at the entrance of some particular person every face brightens with gladness, and every hand is extended in salutation, yet if you pursue him beyond the first exchange of civilities, you will find him of very small importance, and only welcome to the company, as one by whom all conceive themselves admired, and with whom any one is at liberty to amuse himself when he can find no other auditor or companion; as one with whom all are at ease, who will hear a jest without criticism, and a narrative without contradiction, who laughs with every wit, and yields to every disputer.

There are many whose vanity always inclines them to associate with those from whom they have no reason to fear mortification; and there are times in which the wise and the knowing are willing to receive praise without the labour of deserving it, in which the most elevated mind is willing to descend, and the most active to be at rest. All therefore are at some hour or another fond of companions whom they can entertain upon easy terms, and who will relieve them from solitude, without condemning them to vigilance and caution. We are most inclined to love when we have nothing to fear, and he that encourages us to please ourselves, will not be long without preference in our affection to those whose learning holds us at the distance of pupils, or whose wit calls all attention from us, and leaves us without importance and without regard.

It is remarked by prince Henry, when he sees Falstaff lying on the ground, that *he could have better spared a better man.* He was well acquainted with the vices and follies of him whom he lamented, but while his conviction compelled him to do justice to superior qualities, his tenderness still broke out at the remembrance of Falstaff, of the cheerful companion, the loud buffoon, with whom

he had passed his time in all the luxury of idleness, who had gladded him with unenvied merriment, and whom he could at once enjoy and despise.

You may perhaps think this account of those who are distinguished for their good-humour, not very consistent with the praises which I have bestowed upon it. But surely nothing can more evidently shew the value of this quality, than that it recommends those who are destitute of all other excellencies, and procures regard to the trifling, friendship to the worthless, and affection to the dull.

Good-humour is indeed generally degraded by the characters in which it is found; for, being considered as a cheap and vulgar quality, we find it often neglected by those that, having excellencies of higher reputation and brighter splendour, perhaps imagine that they have some right to gratify themselves at the expence of others, and are to demand compliance, rather than to practise it. It is by some unfortunate mistake that almost all those who have any claim to esteem or love, press their pretensions with too little consideration of others. This mistake, my own interest, as well as my zeal for general happiness, makes me desirous to rectify; for I have a friend, who, because he knows his own fidelity and usefulness, is never willing to sink into a companion: I have a wife whose beauty first subdued me, and whose wit confirmed her conquest, but whose beauty now serves no other purpose than to entitle her to tyranny, and whose wit is only used to justify perverseness.

Surely nothing can be more unreasonable than to lose the will to please, when we are conscious of the power, or show more cruelty than to choose any kind of influence before that of kindness. He that regards the welfare of others, should make his virtue approachable, that it may be loved and copied; and he that considers the wants which every man feels, or will feel, of external assistance, must rather wish to be surrounded by those that love him, than by those that admire his excellencies, or solicit his favours; for admiration ceases with novelty, and interest gains its

end and retires. A man whose great qualities want the ornament of superficial attractions, is like a naked mountain with mines of gold, which will be frequented only till the treasure is exhausted. I am, &c.

PHILOMIDES.

N° 73. TUESDAY, *November* 27, 1750.

Stulte, quid heu! votis frustra puerilibus optas,
Quæ non ulla tulit, fertve, feretve dies.—OVID.

Why thinks the fool with childish hope to see
What neither is, nor was, nor e'er shall be?—ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IF you feel any of that compassion which you recommend to others, you will not disregard a case which I have reason from observation to believe very common, and which I know by experience to be very miserable. And though the querulous are seldom received with great ardour of kindness, I hope to escape the mortification of finding that my lamentations spread the contagion of impatience, and produce anger rather than tenderness. I write not merely to vent the swelling of my heart, but to inquire by what means I may recover my tranquillity; and shall endeavour at brevity in my narrative, having long known that complaint quickly tires, however elegant, or however just.

I was born in a remote county, of a family that boasts alliances with the greatest names in the English history, and extends its claims of affinity to the Tudors and Plantagenets. My ancestors, by little and little, wasted their patrimony, till my father had not enough left for the support of a family, without descending to the cultivation of his own grounds, being condemned to pay three sisters the fortunes allotted them by my grandfather, who is suspected to have made his will when he was incapable of adjusting properly the claims of his children, and who, perhaps

without design, enriched his daughters by beggaring his son. My aunts being, at the death of their father, neither young nor beautiful, nor very eminent for softness of behaviour, were suffered to live unsolicited; and by accumulating the interest of their portions grew every day richer and prouder. My father pleased himself with foreseeing that the possessions of those ladies must revert at last to the hereditary estate, and, that his family might lose none of its dignity, resolved to keep me untainted with a lucrative employment; whenever therefore I discovered any inclination to the improvement of my condition, my mother never failed to put me in mind of my birth, and charged me to do nothing with which I might be reproached when I should come to my aunts' estate.

In all the perplexities or vexations which want of money brought upon us, it was our constant practice to have recourse to futurity. If any of our neighbours surpassed us in appearance, we went home and contrived an equipage, with which the death of my aunts was to supply us. If any purse-proud upstart was deficient in respect, vengeance was referred to the time in which our estate was to be repaired. We registered every act of civility and rudeness, enquired the number of dishes at every feast, and minuted the furniture of every house, that we might, when the hour of affluence should come, be able to eclipse all their splendour, and surpass all their magnificence.

Upon plans of elegance and schemes of pleasure the day rose and set, and the year went round unregarded, while we were busied in laying out plantations on ground not yet our own, and deliberating whether the manor-house should be rebuilt or repaired. This was the amusement of our leisure, and the solace of our exigencies; we met together only to contrive how our approaching fortune should be enjoyed; for in this our conversation always ended, on whatever subject it began. We had none of the collateral interests which diversify the life of others with joys and hopes, but had turned our whole attention on one event, which we could neither has ten nor retard,

and had no other object of curiosity than the health or sickness of my aunts, of which we were careful to procure very exact and early intelligence.

This visionary opulence for awhile soothed our imagination, but afterwards fired our wishes, and exasperated our necessities, and my father could not always restrain himself from exclaiming, that *no creature had so many lives as a cat and an old maid.* At last, upon the recovery of his sister from an ague, which she was supposed to have caught by sparing fire, he began to lose his stomach, and four months afterwards sunk into his grave.

My mother, who loved her husband, survived him but a little while, and left me the sole heir of their lands, their schemes, and their wishes. As I had not enlarged my conceptions either by books or conversation, I differed only from my father by the freshness of my cheeks, and the vigour of my step; and, like him, gave way to no thoughts but of enjoying the wealth which my aunts were hoarding.

At length the eldest fell ill. I paid the civilities and compliments which sickness requires with the utmost punctuality. I dreamed every night of escutcheons and white gloves, and enquired every morning at an early hour, whether there was any news of my dear aunt. At last a messenger was sent to inform me that I must come to her without the delay of a moment. I went, and heard her last advice; but opening her will, found that she had left her fortune to her second sister.

I hung my head; the youngest sister threatened to be married, and every thing was disappointment and discontent. I was in danger of losing irreparably one-third of my hopes, and was condemned still to wait for the rest. Of part of my terror I was soon eased; for the youth whom his relations would have compelled to marry the old lady, after innumerable stipulations, articles, and settlements, ran away with the daughter of his father's groom; and my aunt, upon this conviction of the perfidy of man, resolved never to listen more to amorous addresses.

Ten years longer I dragged the shackles of expectation, without ever suffering a day to pass, in which I did not compute how much my chance was improved of being rich to-morrow. At last the second lady died, after a short illness, which yet was long enough to afford her time for the disposal of her estate, which she gave to me after the death of her sister.

I was now relieved from part of my misery; a larger fortune, though not in my power, was certain and unalienable; nor was there now any danger, that I might at last be frustrated of my hopes by a fret of dotage, the flatteries of a chambermaid, the whispers of a tale-bearer, or the officiousness of a nurse. But my wealth was yet in reversion; my aunt was to be buried before I could emerge to grandeur and pleasure; and there were yet, according to my father's observation, nine lives between me and happiness.

I however lived on, without any clamours of discontent, and comforted myself with considering, that all are mortal, and they who are continually decaying must at last be destroyed.

But let no man from this time suffer his felicity to depend on the death of his aunt. The good gentlewoman was very regular in her hours, and simple in her diet, and in walking or sitting still, waking or sleeping, had always in view the preservation of her health. She was subject to no disorder but hypochondriac dejection: by which, without intention, she increased my miseries; for whenever the weather was cloudy, she would take her bed, and send me notice that her time was come. I went with all the haste of eagerness, and sometimes received passionate injunctions to be kind to her maid, and directions how the last offices should be performed; but if before my arrival the sun happened to break out, or the wind to change, I met her at the door, or found her in the garden, bustling and vigilant, with all the tokens of long life.

Sometimes, however, she fell into distempers, and was thrice given over by the doctor, yet she found means of

slipping through the gripe of death; and after having tortured me three months at each time with violent alternations of hope and fear, came out of her chamber without any other hurt than the loss of flesh, which in a few weeks she recovered by broths and jellies.

As most have sagacity sufficient to guess at the desires of an heir, it was the constant practice of those who were hoping at second-hand, and endeavoured to secure my favour against the time when I should be rich, to pay their court, by informing me that my aunt began to droop, that she had lately a bad night, that she coughed feebly, and that she could never climb May-hill; or, at least, that the autumn would carry her off. Thus was I flattered in the winter with the piercing winds of March, and in summer, with the fogs of September. But she lived through spring and fall, and set heat and cold at defiance, till, after near half a century, I buried her on the fourteenth of last June, aged ninety-three years, five months, and six days.

For two months after her death I was rich, and was pleased with that obsequiousness and reverence which wealth instantaneously procures. But this joy is now past, and I have returned again to my old habit of wishing. Being accustomed to give the future full power over my mind, and to start away from the scene before me to some expected enjoyment, I deliver up myself to the tyranny of every desire which fancy suggests, and long for a thousand things which I am unable to procure. Money has much less power than is ascribed to it by those that want it. I had formed schemes which I cannot execute; I had supposed events which do not come to pass; and the rest of my life must pass in craving solicitude, unless you can find some remedy for a mind, corrupted with an inveterate disease of wishing, and unable to think on any thing but wants, which reason tells me will never be supplied.

I am, &c.

CUPIDUS.

N° 74. SATURDAY, *December* 1, 1750.

Rixatur de lanâ sæpe caprinâ.—HOR.

For nought tormented, she for nought torments.—ELPHINSTON.

MEN seldom give pleasure, where they are not pleased themselves; it is necessary, therefore, to cultivate an habitual alacrity and cheerfulness, that in whatever state we may be placed by Providence, whether we are appointed to confer or receive benefits, to implore or to afford protection, we may secure the love of those with whom we transact. For though it is generally imagined, that he who grants favours, may spare any attention to his behaviour, and that usefulness will always procure friends; yet it has been found, that there is an art of granting requests, an art very difficult of attainment; that officiousness and liberality may be so adulterated, as to lose the greater part of their effect; that compliance may provoke, relief may harass, and liberality distress.

No disease of the mind can more fatally disable it from benevolence, the chief duty of social beings, than ill-humour or peevishness; for though it breaks not out in paroxysms of outrage, nor bursts into clamour, turbulence, and bloodshed, it wears out happiness by slow corrosion, and small injuries incessantly repeated. It may be considered as the canker of life, that destroys its vigour, and checks its improvement, that creeps on with hourly depredations, and taints and vitiates what it cannot consume.

Peevishness, when it has been so far indulged, as to outrun the motions of the will, and discover itself without premeditation, is a species of depravity in the highest degree disgusting and offensive, because no rectitude of intention, nor softness of address, can ensure a moment's exemption from affront and indignity. While we are courting the favour of a peevish man, and exerting ourselves in the most diligent civility, an unlucky syllable displeases, an unheeded circumstance ruffles and exasperates; and in the moment when we congratulate ourselves

upon having gained a friend, our endeavours are frustrated at once, and all our assiduity forgotten, in the casual tumult of some trifling irritation.

This troublesome impatience is sometimes nothing more than the symptom of some deeper malady. He that is angry without daring to confess his resentment, or sorrowful without the liberty of telling his grief, is too frequently inclined to give vent to the fermentations of his mind at the first passages that are opened, and to let his passions boil over upon those whom accident throws in his way. A painful and tedious course of sickness frequently produces such an alarming apprehension of the least increase of uneasiness, as keeps the soul perpetually on the watch, such a restless and incessant solicitude, as no care or tenderness can appease, and can only be pacified by the cure of the distemper, and the removal of that pain by which it is excited.

Nearly approaching to this weakness, is the captiousness of old age. When the strength is crushed, the senses dulled, and the common pleasures of life become insipid by repetition, we are willing to impute our uneasiness to causes not wholly out of our power, and please ourselves with fancying that we suffer by neglect, unkindness, or any evil which admits a remedy, rather than by the decays of nature, which cannot be prevented or repaired. We therefore revenge our pains upon those on whom we resolve to charge them; and too often drive mankind away at the time we have the greatest need of tenderness and assistance.

But though peevishness may sometimes claim our compassion, as the consequence or concomitant of misery, it is very often found, where nothing can justify or excuse its admission. It is frequently one of the attendants on the prosperous, and is employed by insolence in exacting homage, or by tyranny in harassing subjection. It is the offspring of idleness or pride; of idleness anxious for trifles; or pride unwilling to endure the least obstruction of her wishes. Those who have long lived in solitude

indeed naturally contract this unsocial quality, because, having long had only themselves to please, they do not readily depart from their own inclinations; their singularities therefore are only blameable, when they have imprudently or morosely withdrawn themselves from the world: but there are others, who have, without any necessity, nursed up this habit in their minds, by making implicit submissiveness the condition of their favour, and suffering none to approach them, but those who never speak but to applaud, or move but to obey.

He that gives himself up to his own fancy, and converses with none but such as he hires to lull him on the down of absolute authority, to sooth him with obsequiousness, and regale him with flattery, soon grows too slothful for the labour of contest, too tender for the asperity of contradiction, and too delicate for the coarseness of truth; a little opposition offends, a little restraint enrages, and a little difficulty perplexes him; having been accustomed to see every thing give way to his humour, he soon forgets his own littleness, and expects to find the world rolling at his beck, and all mankind employed to accommodate and delight him.

Tetrica had a large fortune bequeathed to her by an aunt, which made her very early independent, and placed her in a state of superiority to all about her. Having no superfluity of understanding, she was soon intoxicated by the flatteries of her maid, who informed her that ladies, such as she, had nothing to do but take pleasure their own way; that she wanted nothing from others, and had therefore no reason to value their opinion; that money was every thing; and that they who thought themselves ill-treated, should look for better usage among their equals.

Warm with these generous sentiments, Tetrica came forth into the world, in which she endeavoured to force respect by haughtiness of mien and vehemence of language: but having neither birth, beauty, nor wit, in any uncommon degree, she suffered such mortifications from those who thought themselves at liberty to return her in-

sults, as reduced her turbulence to cooler malignity, and taught her to practise her arts of vexation only where she might hope to tyrannize without resistance. She continued from her twentieth to her fifty-fifth year to torment all her inferiours with so much diligence, that she has formed a principle of disapprobation, and finds in every place something to grate her mind, and disturb her quiet.

If she takes the air, she is offended with the heat or cold, the glare of the sun, or the gloom of the clouds; if she makes a visit, the room in which she is to be received, is too light, or too dark, or furnished with something which she cannot see without aversion. Her tea is never of the right sort; the figures on the China give her disgust. Where there are children, she hates the gabble of brats; where there are none, she cannot bear a place without some cheerfulness and rattle. If many servants are kept in a house, she never fails to tell how lord Lavish was ruined by a numerous retinue; if few, she relates the story of a miser that made his company wait on themselves. She quarrelled with one family, because she had an unpleasant view from their windows; with another, because the squirrel leaped within two yards of her; and with a third, because she could not bear the noise of the parrot.

Of milliners and mantua-makers she is the proverbial torment. She compels them to alter their work, then to unmake it, and contrive it after another fashion; then changes her mind, and likes it better as it was at first; then will have a small improvement. Thus she proceeds till no profit can recompence the vexation; they at last leave the clothes at her house, and refuse to serve her. Her maid, the only being who can endure her tyranny, professes to take her own course, and hear her mistress talk. Such is the consequence of peevishness; it can be borne only when it is despised.

It sometimes happens that too close an attention to minute exactness, or a too rigorous habit of examining every thing by the standard of perfection, vitiates the temper,

rather than improves the understanding, and teaches the mind to discern faults with unhappy penetration. It is incident likewise to men of vigorous imagination to please themselves too much with futurities, and to fret because those expectations are disappointed, which should never have have been formed. Knowledge and genius are often enemies to quiet, by suggesting ideas of excellence, which men, and the performances of men, cannot attain. But let no man rashly determine, that his unwillingness to be pleased is a proof of understanding, unless his superiority appears from less doubtful evidence; for though peevishness may sometimes justly boast its descent from learning or from wit, it is much oftener of a base extraction, the child of vanity and nursling of ignorance.

N° 75. TUESDAY, *December* 4, 1750.

Diligitur nemo, nisi cui Fortuna secunda est,
Quæ, simul intonuit, proxima quæque fugat.—OVID.

When smiling Fortune spreads her golden ray,
All crowd around to flatter and obey:
But when she thunders from an angry sky,
Our friends, our flatterers, our lovers fly.—Miss A. W.*

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THE diligence with which you endeavour to cultivate the knowledge of nature, manners, and life, will perhaps incline you to pay some regard to the observations of one who has been taught to know mankind by unwelcome information, and whose opinions are the result, not of solitary conjectures, but of practice and experience.

I was born to a large fortune, and bred to the knowledge of those arts which are supposed to accomplish the mind, and adorn the person of a woman. To these attainments, which custom and education almost forced upon me, I added some voluntary acquisitions by the use of books,

* Anna Williams, for an account of whom see the Life of Dr. Johnson.

and the conversation of that species of men whom the ladies generally mention with terrour and aversion under the name of scholars; but whom I have found a harmless and inoffensive order of beings; not so much wiser than ourselves, but that they may receive as well as communicate knowledge, and more inclined to degrade their own character by cowardly submission, than to overbear or oppress us with their learning or their wit.

From these men, however, if they are by kind treatment encouraged to talk, something may be gained, which, embellished with elegancy, and softened by modesty, will always add dignity and value to female conversation; and from my acquaintance with the bookish part of the world I derived many principles of judgment and maxims of prudence, by which I was enabled to draw upon myself the general regard in every place of concourse or pleasure. My opinion was the great rule of approbation, my remarks were remembered by those who desired the second degree of fame, my mien was studied, my dress was imitated, my letters were handed from one family to another, and read by those who copied them as sent to themselves; my visits were solicited as honours, and multitudes boasted of an intimacy with Melissa, who had only seen me by accident, and whose familiarity had never proceeded beyond the exchange of a compliment, or return of a courtesy.

I shall make no scruple of confessing that I was pleased with this universal veneration, because I always considered it as paid to my intrinsick qualities and inseparable merit, and very easily persuaded myself that fortune had no part in my superiority. When I looked upon my glass, I saw youth and beauty, with health that might give me reason to hope their continuance; when I examined my mind, I found some strength of judgment, and fertility of fancy; and was told that every action was grace, and that every accent was persuasion.

In this manner my life passed like a continual triumph, amidst acclamations, and envy, and courtship, and ca-

resses: to please Melissa was the general ambition, and every stratagem of artful flattery was practised upon me. To be flattered is grateful, even when we know that our praises are not believed by those who pronounce them; for they prove, at least, our power, and shew that our favour is valued, since it is purchased by the meanness of falsehood. But, perhaps, the flatterer is not often detected, for an honest mind is not apt to suspect, and no one exerts the power of discernment with much vigour when self-love favours the deceit.

The number of adorers, and the perpetual distraction of my thoughts by new schemes of pleasure, prevented me from listening to any of those who crowd in multitudes to give girls advice, and kept me unmarried and unengaged to my twenty-seventh year, when, as I was towering in all the pride of uncontested excellency, with a face yet little impaired, and a mind hourly improving, the failure of a fund, in which my money was placed, reduced me to a frugal competency, which allowed little beyond neatness and independence.

I bore the diminution of my riches without any outrages of sorrow, or pusillanimity of dejection. Indeed I did not know how much I had lost, for, having always heard and thought more of my wit and beauty, than of my fortune, it did not suddenly enter my imagination, that Melissa could sink beneath her established rank, while her form and her mind continued the same; that she could cease to raise admiration but by ceasing to deserve it, or feel any stroke but from the hand of time.

It was in my power to have concealed the loss, and to have married, by continuing the same appearance, with all the credit of my original fortune; but I was not so far sunk in my own esteem, as to submit to the baseness of fraud, or to desire any other recommendation than sense and virtue. I therefore dismissed my equipage, sold those ornaments which were become unsuitable to my new condition, and appeared among those with whom I used to converse with less glitter, but with equal spirit.

I found myself received at every visit, with sorrow beyond what is naturally felt for calamities in which we have no part, and was entertained with condolence and consolation so frequently repeated, that my friends plainly consulted rather their own gratification, than my relief. Some from that time refused my acquaintance, and forbore, without any provocation, to repay my visits; some visited me, but after a longer interval than usual, and every return was still with more delay; nor did any of my female acquaintances fail to introduce the mention of my misfortunes, to compare my present and former condition, to tell me how much it must trouble me to want the splendour which I became so well, to look at pleasures which I had formerly enjoyed, and to sink to a level with those by whom I had been considered as moving in a higher sphere, and who had hitherto approached me with reverence and submission, which I was now no longer to expect.

Observations like these, are commonly nothing better than covert insults, which serve to give vent to the flatulence of pride, but they are now and then imprudently uttered by honesty and benevolence, and inflict pain where kindness is intended. I will, therefore, so far maintain my antiquated claim to politeness, as to venture the establishment of this rule, that no one ought to remind another of misfortunes of which the sufferer does not complain, and which there are no means proposed of alleviating. You have no right to excite thoughts which necessarily give pain whenever they return, and which perhaps might not have revived, but by absurd and unseasonable compassion.

My endless train of lovers immediately withdrew, without raising any emotions. The greater part had indeed always professed to court, as it is termed, upon the square, had enquired my fortune, and offered settlements; these had undoubtedly a right to retire without censure, since they had openly treated for money, as necessary to their happiness, and who can tell how little they wanted any

other portion? I have always thought the clamours of women unreasonable, who imagine themselves injured because the men who followed them upon the supposition of a greater fortune, reject them when they are discovered to have less. I have never known any lady, who did not think wealth a title to some stipulations in her favour; and surely what is claimed by the possession of money is justly forfeited by its loss. She that has once demanded a settlement has allowed the importance of fortune: and when she cannot shew pecuniary merit, why should she think her cheapener obliged to purchase?

My lovers were not all contented with silent desertion. Some of them revenged the neglect which they had formerly endured by wanton and superfluous insults, and endeavoured to mortify me, by paying, in my presence, those civilities to other ladies, which were once devoted only to me. But, as it had been my rule to treat men according to the rank of their intellect, I had never suffered any one to waste his life in suspence, who could have employed it to better purpose, and had therefore no enemies but coxcombs, whose resentment and respect were equally below my consideration.

The only pain which I have felt from degradation, is the loss of that influence which I had always exerted on the side of virtue, in the defence of innocence, and the assertion of truth. I now find my opinions slighted, my sentiments criticised, and my arguments opposed by those that used to listen to me without reply, and struggle to be first in expressing their conviction.

The female disputants have wholly thrown off my authority; and if I endeavour to enforce my reasons by an appeal to the scholars that happen to be present, the wretches are certain to pay their court by sacrificing me and my system to a finer gown, and I am every hour insulted with contradiction by cowards, who could never find till lately that Melissa was liable to errour.

There are two persons only whom I cannot charge with having changed their conduct with my change of

fortune. One is an old curate that has passed his life in the duties of his profession, with great reputation for his knowledge and piety; the other is a lieutenant of dragoons. The parson made no difficulty in the height of my elevation to check me when I was pert, and instruct me when I blundered; and if there is any alteration, he is now more timorous lest his freedom should be thought rudeness. The soldier never paid me any particular addresses, but very rigidly observed all the rules of politeness, which he is now so far from relaxing, that whenever he serves the tea, he obstinately carries me the first dish, in defiance of the frowns and whispers of the table.

This, Mr. Rambler, is *to see the world.* It is impossible for those that have only known affluence and prosperity, to judge rightly of themselves or others. The rich and the powerful live in a perpetual masquerade, in which all about them wear borrowed characters; and we only discover in what estimation we are held, when we can no longer give hopes or fears. I am, &c.

MELISSA.

N° 76. SATURDAY, *December* 8, 1750.

——— *Silvis ubi passim*
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit.
Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus.—HOR.

While mazy errour draws mankind astray
From truth's sure path, each takes his devious way;
One to the right, one to the left recedes,
Alike deluded, as each fancy leads.—ELPHINSTON.

IT is easy for every man, whatever be his character with others, to find reasons for esteeming himself, and therefore censure, contempt, or conviction of crimes, seldom deprive him of his own favour. Those, indeed, who can see only external facts, may look upon him with abhorrence; but when he calls himself to his own tribunal, he finds every fault, if not absolutely effaced, yet so much pal-

liated by the goodness of his intention, and the cogency of the motive, that very little guilt or turpitude remains; and when he takes a survey of the whole complication of his character, he discovers so many latent excellencies, so many virtues that want but an opportunity to exert themselves in act, and so many kind wishes for universal happiness, that he looks on himself as suffering unjustly under the infamy of single failings, while the general temper of his mind is unknown or unregarded.

It is natural to mean well, when only abstracted ideas of virtue are proposed to the mind, and no particular passion turns us aside from rectitude; and so willing is every man to flatter himself, that the difference between approving laws, and obeying them, is frequently forgotten; he that acknowledges the obligations of morality, and pleases his vanity with enforcing them to others, concludes himself zealous in the cause of virtue, though he has no longer any regard to her precepts, than they conform to his own desires: and counts himself among her warmest lovers, because he praises her beauty, though every rival steals away his heart.

There are, however, great numbers who have little recourse to the refinements of speculation, but who yet live at peace with themselves, by means which require less understanding, or less attention. When their hearts are burthened with the consciousness of a crime, instead of seeking for some remedy within themselves, they look round upon the rest of mankind, to find others tainted with the same guilt: they please themselves with observing, that they have numbers on their side; and that, though they are hunted out from the society of good men, they are not likely to be condemned to solitude.

It may be observed, perhaps without exception, that none are so industrious to detect wickedness, or so ready to impute it, as they whose crimes are apparent and confessed. They envy an unblemished reputation, and what they envy they are busy to destroy; they are unwilling to suppose themselves meaner and more corrupt than others,

and therefore willingly pull down from their elevations those with whom they cannot rise to an equality. No man yet was ever wicked without secret discontent, and according to the different degrees of remaining virtue, or unextinguished reason, he either endeavours to reform himself, or corrupt others; either to regain the station which he has quitted, or prevail on others to imitate his defection.

It has always been considered as an alleviation of misery not to suffer alone, even when union and society can contribute nothing to resistance or escape; some comfort of the same kind seems to incite wickedness to seek associates, though indeed another reason may be given, for as guilt is propagated the power of reproach is diminished, and among numbers equally detestable every individual may be sheltered from shame, though not from conscience.

Another lenitive by which the throbs of the breast are assuaged, is, the contemplation, not of the same, but of different crimes. He that cannot justify himself by his resemblance to others, is ready to try some other expedient, and to inquire what will rise to his advantage from opposition and dissimilitude. He easily finds some faults in every human being, which he weighs against his own, and easily makes them preponderate while he keeps the balance in his own hand, and throws in or takes out at his pleasure circumstances that make them heavier or lighter. He then triumphs in his comparative purity, and sets himself at ease, not because he can refute the charges advanced against him, but because he can censure his accusers with equal justice, and no longer fears the arrows of reproach, when he has stored his magazine of malice with weapons equally sharp and equally envenomed.

This practice, though never just, is yet specious and artful, when the censure is directed against deviations to the contrary extreme. The man who is branded with cowardice, may, with some appearance of propriety, turn all his force of argument against a stupid contempt of life, and rash precipitation into unnecessary danger.

Every recession from temerity is an approach towards cowardice, and though it be confessed that bravery, like other virtues, stands between faults on either hand, yet the place of the middle point may always be disputed; he may therefore often impose upon careless understandings, by turning the attention wholly from himself, and keeping it fixed invariably on the opposite fault; and by shewing how many evils are avoided by his behaviour, he may conceal for a time those which are incurred.

But vice has not always opportunities or address for such artful subterfuges; men often extenuate their own guilt, only by vague and general charges upon others, or endeavour to gain rest to themselves, by pointing some other prey to the pursuit of censure.

Every whisper of infamy is industriously circulated, every hint of suspicion eagerly improved, and every failure of conduct joyfully published, by those whose interest it is, that the eye and voice of the publick should be employed on any rather than on themselves.

All these artifices, and a thousand others equally vain and equally despicable, are incited by that conviction of the deformity of wickedness, from which none can set himself free, and by an absurd desire to separate the cause from the effects, and to enjoy the profit of crimes without suffering the shame. Men are willing to try all methods of reconciling guilt and quiet, and when their understandings are stubborn and uncomplying, raise their passions against them, and hope to overpower their own knowledge.

It is generally not so much the desire of men, sunk into depravity, to deceive the world as themselves; for when no particular circumstances make them dependant on others, infamy disturbs them little, but as it revives their remorse, and is echoed to them from their own hearts. The sentence most dreaded is that of reason and conscience, which they would engage on their side at any price but the labours of duty, and the sorrows of repentance. For this purpose every seducement and fallacy is sought, the hopes

still rest upon some new experiment till life is at an end; and the last hour steals on unperceived, while the faculties are engaged in resisting reason, and repressing the sense of the Divine disapprobation.

N° 77. TUESDAY, *December* 11, 1750.

Os dignum æterno nitidum quod fulgeat auro,
Si mallet laudare Deum, cui sordida monstra
Prætulit, et liquidam temeravit crimine vocem.—PRUDENT.

A golden statue such a wit might claim,
Had God and virtue rais'd the noble flame;
But ah! how lewd a subject has he sung,
What vile obscenity profanes his tongue.—F. LEWIS.

AMONG those, whose hopes of distinction, or riches, arise from an opinion of their intellectual attainments, it has been, from age to age, an established custom to complain of the ingratitude of mankind to their instructors, and the discouragement which men of genius and study suffer from avarice and ignorance, from the prevalence of false taste, and the encroachment of barbarity.

Men are most powerfully affected by those evils which themselves feel, or which appear before their own eyes; and as there has never been a time of such general felicity, but that many have failed to obtain the rewards to which they had, in their own judgment, a just claim, some offended writer has always declaimed, in the rage of disappointment, against his age or nation; nor is there one who has not fallen upon times more unfavourable to learning than any former century, or who does not wish, that he had been reserved in the insensibility of non-existence to some happier hour, when literary merit shall no longer be despised, and the gifts and caresses of mankind shall recompence the toils of study, and add lustre to the charms of wit.

Many of these clamours are undoubtedly to be considered only as the bursts of pride never to be satisfied,

as the prattle of affectation mimicking distresses unfelt, or as the common-places of vanity solicitous for splendour of sentences, and acuteness of remark. Yet it cannot be denied that frequent discontent must proceed from frequent hardships, and though it is evident, that not more than one age or people can deserve the censure of being more averse from learning than any other, yet at all times knowledge must have encountered impediments, and wit been mortified with contempt, or harassed with persecution.

It is not necessary, however, to join immediately in the outcry, or to condemn mankind as pleased with ignorance, or always envious of superiour abilities. The miseries of the learned have been related by themselves, and since they have not been found exempt from that partiality with which men look upon their own actions and sufferings, we may conclude that they have not forgotten to deck their cause with the brightest ornaments, and strongest colours. The logician collected all his subtilties when they were to be employed in his own defence; and the master of rhetorick exerted against his adversary all the arts by which hatred is embittered, and indignation inflamed.

To believe no man in his own cause, is the standing and perpetual rule of distributive justice. Since, therefore, in the controversy between the learned and their enemies, we have only the pleas of one party, of the party more able to delude our understandings, and engage our passions, we must determine our opinion by facts uncontested, and evidences on each side allowed to be genuine.

By this procedure, I know not whether the students will find their cause promoted, or the compassion which they expect much increased. Let their conduct be impartially surveyed; let them be allowed no longer to direct attention at their pleasure, by expatiating on their own deserts; let neither the dignity of knowledge overawe the judgment, nor the graces of elegance seduce it. It will then, perhaps, be found, that they were not able to pro-

duce claims to kinder treatment, but provoked the calamities which they suffered, and seldom wanted friends, but when they wanted virtue.

That few men, celebrated for theoretick wisdom, live with conformity to their precepts, must be readily confessed; and we cannot wonder that the indignation of mankind rises with great vehemence against those who neglect the duties which they appear to know with so strong conviction the necessity of performing. Yet since no man has power of acting equal to that of thinking, I know not whether the speculatist may not sometimes incur censures too severe, and by those who form ideas of his life from their knowledge of his books, be considered as worse than others, only because he was expected to be better.

He, by whose writings the heart is rectified, the appetites counteracted, and the passions repressed, may be considered as not unprofitable to the great republick of humanity, even though his behaviour should not always exemplify his rules. His instructions may diffuse their influence to regions, in which it will not be inquired, whether the author be *albus an ater*, good or bad; to times, when all his faults and all his follies shall be lost in forgetfulness, among things of no concern or importance to the world; and he may kindle in thousands and ten thousands that flame which burnt but dimly in himself, through the fumes of passion, or the damps of cowardice. The vicious moralist may be considered as a taper, by which we are lighted through the labyrinth of complicated passions: he extends his radiance further than his heat, and guides all that are within view, but burns only those who make too near approaches.

Yet since good or harm must be received for the most part from those to whom we are familiarly known, he whose vices overpower his virtues, in the compass to which his vices can extend, has no reason to complain that he meets not with affection or veneration, when those with whom he passes his life are more corrupted by his

practice than enlightened by his ideas. Admiration begins where acquaintance ceases; and his favourers are distant, but his enemies at hand.

Yet many have dared to boast of neglected merit, and to challenge their age for cruelty and folly, of whom it cannot be alledged that they have endeavoured to increase the wisdom or virtue of their readers. They have been at once profligate in their lives, and licentious in their compositions; have not only forsaken the paths of virtue, but attempted to lure others after them. They have smoothed the road of perdition, covered with flowers the thorns of guilt, and taught temptation sweeter notes, softer blandishments, and stronger allurements.

It has been apparently the settled purpose of some writers, whose powers and acquisitions place them high in the rank of literature, to set fashion on the side of wickedness; to recommend debauchery and lewdness, by associating them with qualities most likely to dazzle the discernment, and attract the affections; and to shew innocence and goodness with such attendant weaknesses as necessarily expose them to contempt and derision.

Such naturally found intimates among the corrupt, the thoughtless, and the intemperate; passed their lives amidst the levities of sportive idleness, or the warm professions of drunken friendship; and fed their hopes with the promises of wretches, whom their precepts had taught to scoff at truth. But when fools had laughed away their sprightliness, and the languors of excess could no longer be relieved, they saw their protectors hourly drop away, and wondered and stormed to find themselves abandoned. Whether their companions persisted in wickedness, or returned to virtue, they were left equally without assistance; for debauchery is selfish and negligent, and from virtue the virtuous only can expect regard.

It is said by Florus of Catiline, who died in the midst of slaughtered enemies, that *his death had been illustrious, had it been suffered for his country.* Of the wits who have languished away life under the pressures of poverty,

or in the restlessness of suspence, caressed and rejected, flattered and despised, as they were of more or less use to those who stiled themselves their patrons, it might be observed, that their miseries would enforce compassion, had they been brought upon them by honesty and religion.

The wickedness of a loose or profane author is more atrocious than that of the giddy libertine, or drunken ravisher, not only because it extends its effects wider, as a pestilence that taints the air is more destructive than poison infused in a draught, but because it is committed with cool deliberation. By the instantaneous violence of desire, a good man may sometimes be surprized before reflection can come to his rescue; when the appetites have strengthened their influence by habit, they are not easily resisted or suppressed; but for the frigid villainy of studious lewdness, for the calm malignity of laboured impiety, what apology can be invented? What punishment can be adequate to the crime of him who retires to solitudes for the refinement of debauchery; who tortures his fancy, and ransacks his memory, only that he may leave the world less virtuous than he found it; that he may intercept the hopes of the rising generation; and spread snares for the soul with more dexterity?

What were their motives, or what their excuses, is below the dignity of reason to examine. If, having extinguished in themselves the distinction of right and wrong, they were insensible of the mischief which they promoted, they deserved to be hunted down by the general compact, as no longer partaking of social nature; if, influenced by the corruption of patrons, or readers, they sacrificed their own convictions to vanity or interest, they were to be abhorred with more acrimony than he that murders for pay; since they committed greater crimes without greater temptations.

Of him, to whom much is given, much shall be required. Those, whom God has favoured with superiour faculties, and made eminent for quickness of intuition, and accuracy of distinctions, will certainly be regarded as culpable in

his eye, for defects and deviations which, in souls less enlightened, may be guiltless. But, surely, none can think without horrour on that man's condition, who has been more wicked in proportion as he had more means of excelling in virtue, and used the light imparted from heaven only to embellish folly, and shed lustre upon crimes.

N° 78. Saturday, *December* 15, 1750.

—— *Mors sola fatetur*
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula.—Juv.

Death only this mysterious truth unfolds,
The mighty soul how small a body holds.—Dryden.

Corporal sensation is known to depend so much upon novelty, that custom takes away from many things their power of giving pleasure or pain. Thus a new dress becomes easy by wearing it, and the palate is reconciled by degrees to dishes which at first disgusted it. That by long habit of carrying a burden, we lose, in great part, our sensibility of its weight, any man may be convinced by putting on for an hour the armour of our ancestors; for he will scarcely believe that men would have had much inclination to marches and battles, encumbered and oppressed, as he will find himself, with the ancient panoply. Yet the heroes that overran regions, and stormed towns in iron accoutrements, he knows not to have been bigger, and has no reason to imagine them stronger, than the present race of men; he therefore must conclude, that their peculiar powers were conferred only by peculiar habits, and that their familiarity with the dress of war enabled them to move in it with ease, vigour, and agility.

Yet it seems to be the condition of our present state, that pain should be more fixed and permanent than pleasure. Uneasiness gives way by slow degrees, and is long before it quits its possession of the sensory; but all our gratifications are volatile, vagrant, and easily dissipated.

The fragrance of the jessamine bower is lost after the enjoyment of a few moments, and the Indian wanders among his native spices without any sense of their exhalations. It is, indeed, not necessary to shew by many instances what all mankind confess, by an incessant call for variety, and restless pursuit of enjoyments, which they value only because unpossessed.

Something similar, or analogous, may be observed in effects produced immediately upon the mind; nothing can strongly strike or affect us, but what is rare or sudden. The most important events, when they become familiar, are no longer considered with wonder or solicitude, and that which at first filled up our whole attention, and left no place for any other thought, is soon thrust aside into some remote repository of the mind, and lies among other lumber of the memory, overlooked and neglected. Thus far the mind resembles the body, but here the similitude is at an end.

The manner in which external force acts upon the body is very little subject to the regulation of the will; no man can at pleasure obtund or invigorate his senses, prolong the agency of any impulse, or continue the presence of any image traced upon the eye, or any sound infused into the ear. But our ideas are more subjected to choice; we can call them before us, and command their stay, we can facilitate and promote their recurrence, we can either repress their intrusion, or hasten their retreat. It is therefore the business of wisdom and virtue, to select among numberless objects striving for our notice, such as may enable us to exalt our reason, extend our views, and secure our happiness. But this choice is to be made with very little regard to rareness or frequency; for nothing is valuable merely because it is either rare or common, but because it is adapted to some useful purpose, and enables us to supply some deficiency of our nature.

Milton has judiciously represented the father of mankind, as seized with horrour and astonishment at the sight of death exhibited to him on the mount of vision. For

surely, nothing can so much disturb the passions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the disruption of his union with visible nature; a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him; a change not only of the place, but the manner of his being; an entrance into a state not simply which he knows not, but which perhaps he has not faculties to know; an immediate and perceptible communication with the supreme Being, and, what is above all distressful and alarming, the final sentence, and unalterable allotment.

Yet we to whom the shortness of life has given frequent occasions of contemplating mortality, can, without emotion, see generations of men pass away, and are at leisure to establish modes of sorrow, and adjust the ceremonial of death. We can look upon funeral pomp as a common spectacle in which we have no concern, and turn away from it to trifles and amusements, without dejection of look, or inquietude of heart.

It is, indeed, apparent from the constitution of the world, that there must be a time for other thoughts; and a perpetual meditation upon the last hour, however it may become the solitude of a monastery, is inconsistent with many duties of common life. But surely the remembrance of death ought to predominate in our minds, as an habitual and settled principle, always operating, though not always perceived; and our attention should seldom wander so far from our own condition, as not to be recalled and fixed by sight of an event, which must soon—we know not how soon—happen likewise to ourselves, and of which, though we cannot appoint the time, we may secure the consequence.

Every instance of death may justly awaken our fears and quicken our vigilance; but its frequency so much weakens its effect, that we are seldom alarmed unless some close connexion is broken, some scheme frustrated, or some hope defeated. Many therefore seem to pass on from youth to decrepitude without any reflection on the end of life,

because they are wholly involved within themselves, and look on others only as inhabitants of the common earth, without any expectation of receiving good, or intention of bestowing it.

Events, of which we confess the importance, excite little sensibility, unless they affect us more nearly than as sharers in the common interest of mankind; that desire which every man feels of being remembered and lamented, is often mortified when we remark how little concern is caused by the eternal departure even of those who have passed their lives with public honours, and been distinguished by extraordinary performances. It is not possible to be regarded with tenderness except by a few. That merit which gives greatness and renown, diffuses its influence to a wide compass, but acts weakly on every single breast; it is placed at a distance from common spectators, and shines like one of the remote stars, of which the light reaches us, but not the heat. The wit, the hero, the philosopher, whom their tempers or their fortunes have hindered from intimate relations, die, without any other effect than that of adding a new topic to the conversation of the day. They impress none with any fresh conviction of the fragility of our nature, because none had any particular interest in their lives, or was united to them by a reciprocation of benefits and endearments.

Thus it often happens, that those who in their lives were applauded and admired, are laid at last in the ground without the common honour of a stone; because by those excellencies with which many were delighted, none had been obliged, and though they had many to celebrate, they had none to love them.

Custom so far regulates the sentiments, at least of common minds, that I believe men may be generally observed to grow less tender as they advance in age. He, who, when life was new, melted at the loss of every companion, can look, in time, without concern upon the grave into which his last friend was thrown, and into which himself

is ready to fall; not that he is more willing to die than formerly, but that he is more familiar to the death of others, and therefore is not alarmed so far as to consider how much nearer he approaches to his end. But this is to submit tamely to the tyranny of accident, and to suffer our reason to lie useless. Every funeral may justly be considered as a summons to prepare for that state, into which it shews us that we must some time enter; and the summons is more loud and piercing, as the event of which it warns us is at less distance. To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post at a siege; but to omit it in old age, is to sleep at an attack.

It has always appeared to me one of the most striking passages in the Visions of Quevedo, which stigmatizes those as fools who complain that they failed of happiness by sudden death. "How," says he, "can death be sudden to a being who always knew that he must die, and that the time of his death was uncertain?"

Since business and gaiety are always drawing our attention away from a future state, some admonition is frequently necessary to recal it to our minds, and what can more properly renew the impression than the examples of mortality which every day supplies? The great incentive to virtue is the reflection that we must die; it will therefore be useful to accustom ourselves, whenever we see a funeral, to consider how soon we may be added to the number of those whose probation is past, and whose happiness or misery shall endure for ever.

N° 79. Tuesday, *December* 18, 1750.

Tam sæpe nostrum decipi Fabullum, quid
Miraris, Aule? Semper bonus homo tiro est.—Mart.

You wonder I've so little wit,
Friend John, so often to be bit,—
None better guard against a cheat
Than he who is a knave complete.—F. Lewis.

Suspicion, however necessary it may be to our safe passage through ways beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has been always considered, when it exceeds the common measures, as a token of depravity and corruption, and a Greek writer of sentences has laid down as a standing maxim, that *he who believes not another on his oath, knows himself to be perjured.*

We can form our opinions of that which we know not, only by placing it in comparison with something that we know; whoever therefore is overrun with suspicion, and detects artifice and stratagem in every proposal, must either have learned by experience or observation the wickedness of mankind, and been taught to avoid fraud by having often suffered or seen treachery, or he must derive his judgment from the consciouness of his own disposition, and impute to others the same inclinations, which he feels predominant in himself.

To learn caution by turning our eyes upon life, and observing the arts by which negligence is surprized, timidity overborne, and credulity amused, requires either great latitude of converse and long acquaintance with business, or uncommon activity of vigilance, and acuteness of penetration. When, therefore, a young man, not distinguished by vigour of intellect, comes into the world full of scruples and diffidence; makes a bargain with many provisional limitations; hesitates in his answer to a common question, lest more should be intended than he can immediately discover; has a long reach in detecting the projects of his acquaintance; considers every caress as an act of hypocrisy, and feels neither gratitude nor affection from the

tenderness of his friends, because he believes no one to have any real tenderness but for himself; whatever expectations this early sagacity may raise of his future eminence or riches, I can seldom forbear to consider him as a wretch incapable of generosity or benevolence; as a villain early completed beyond the need of common opportunities and gradual temptations.

Upon men of this class instruction and admonition are generally thrown away, because they consider artifice and deceit as proofs of understanding; they are misled at the same time by the two great seducers of the world, vanity and interest, and not only look upon those who act with openness and confidence, as condemned by their principles to obscurity and want, but as contemptible for narrowness of comprehension, shortness of views, and slowness of contrivance.

The world has been long amused with the mention of policy in publick transactions, and of art in private affairs; they have been considered as the effects of great qualities, and as unattainable by men of the common level: yet I have not found many performances either of art or policy, that required such stupendous efforts of intellect, or might not have been effected by falsehood and impudence, without the assistance of any other powers. To profess what he does not mean, to promise what he cannot perform, to flatter ambition with prospects of promotion, and misery with hopes of relief, to sooth pride with appearances of submission, and appease enmity by blandishments and bribes, can surely imply nothing more or greater than a mind devoted wholly to its own purposes, a face that cannot blush, and a heart that cannot feel.

These practices are so mean and base, that he who finds in himself no tendency to use them, cannot easily believe that they are considered by others with less detestation; he therefore suffers himself to slumber in false security, and becomes a prey to those who applaud their own subtilty, because they know how to steal upon his sleep, and exult in the success which they could never have obtained, had they not attempted a man better than

themselves, who was hindered from obviating their stratagems, not by folly, but by innocence.

Suspicion is, indeed, a temper so uneasy and restless, that it is very justly appointed the concomitant of guilt. It is said, that no torture is equal to the inhibition of sleep long continued; a pain, to which the state of that man bears a very exact analogy, who dares never give rest to his vigilance and circumspection, but considers himself as surrounded by secret foes, and fears to entrust his children, or his friend, with the secret that throbs in his breast, and the anxieties that break into his face. To avoid, at this expence, those evils to which easiness and friendship might have exposed him, is surely to buy safety at too dear a rate, and, in the language of the Roman satirist, to save life by losing all for which a wise man would live.*

When in the diet of the German empire, as Camerarius relates, the princes were once displaying their felicity, and each boasting the advantages of his own dominions, one who possessed a country not remarkable for the grandeur of its cities, or the fertility of its soil, rose to speak, and the rest listened between pity and contempt, till he declared, in honour of his territories, that he could travel through them without a guard, and if he was weary, sleep in safety upon the lap of the first man whom he should meet; a commendation which would have been ill exchanged for the boast of palaces, pastures, or streams.

Suspicion is not less an enemy to virtue than to happiness; he that is already corrupt is naturally suspicious, and he that becomes suspicious will quickly be corrupt. It is too common for us to learn the frauds by which ourselves have suffered; men who are once persuaded that deceit will be employed against them, sometimes think the same arts justified by the necessity of defence. Even they whose virtue is too well established to give way to example, or be shaken by sophistry, must yet feel their love of mankind diminished with their esteem, and grow

* Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.—Juv.

less zealous for the happiness of those by whom they imagine their own happiness endangered.

Thus we find old age, upon which suspicion has been strongly impressed, by long intercourse with the world, inflexible and severe, not easily softened by submission, melted by complaint, or subdued by supplication. Frequent experience of counterfeited miseries, and dissembled virtue, in time overcomes that disposition to tenderness and sympathy, which is so powerful in our younger years; and they that happen to petition the old for compassion or assistance, are doomed to languish without regard, and suffer for the crimes of men who have formerly been found undeserving or ungrateful.

Historians are certainly chargeable with the depravation of mankind, when they relate without censure those stratagems of war by which the virtues of an enemy are engaged to his destruction. A ship comes before a port, weather-beaten and shattered, and the crew implore the liberty of repairing their breaches, supplying themselves with necessaries, or burying their dead. The humanity of the inhabitants inclines them to consent; the strangers enter the town with weapons concealed, fall suddenly upon their benefactors, destroy those that make resistance, and become masters of the place; they return home rich with plunder, and their success is recorded to encourage imitation.

But surely war has its laws, and ought to be conducted with some regard to the universal interest of man. Those may justly be pursued as enemies to the community of nature, who suffer hostility to vacate the unalterable laws of right, and pursue their private advantage by means, which, if once established, must destroy kindness, cut off from every man all hopes of assistance from another, and fill the world with perpetual suspicion and implacable malevolence. Whatever is thus gained ought to be restored, and those who have conquered by such treachery may be justly denied the protection of their native country.

Whoever commits a fraud is guilty not only of the par-

ticular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the diminution of that confidence which constitutes not only the ease but the existence of society. He that suffers by imposture has too often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is necessary not to invite robbery by supineness, so it is our duty not to suppress tenderness by suspicion; it is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

N° 80. SATURDAY, *December* 22, 1750.

Vides ut altâ stet nive candidum
Soracte, nec jam sustineant onus
Silvæ laborantes——HOR.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height
Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the lab'ring woods below.—DRYDEN.

As Providence has made the human soul an active being, always impatient for novelty, and struggling for something yet unenjoyed with unwearied progression, the world seems to have been eminently adapted to this disposition of the mind; it is formed to raise expectations by constant vicissitudes, and to obviate satiety by perpetual change.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we find something to revive our curiosity, and engage our attention. In the dusk of the morning we watch the rising of the sun, and see the day diversify the clouds, and open new prospects in its gradual advance. After a few hours, we see the shades lengthen, and the light decline, till the sky is resigned to a multitude of shining orbs different from each other in magnitude and splendour. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it; the woods offer their shades, and the fields their harvests; the hill flatters with an extensive view, and the valley invites with shelter, fragrance, and flowers.

The poets have numbered among the felicities of the

golden age, an exemption from the change of seasons, and a perpetuity of spring; but I am not certain that in this state of imaginary happiness they have made sufficient provision for that insatiable demand of new gratifications, which seems particularly to characterize the nature of man. Our sense of delight is in a great measure comparative, and arises at once from the sensations which we feel, and those which we remember. Thus ease after torment is pleasure for a time, and we are very agreeably recreated, when the body, chilled with the weather, is gradually recovering its natural tepidity; but the joy ceases when we have forgot the cold: we must fall below ease again, if we desire to rise above it, and purchase new felicity by voluntary pain. It is therefore not unlikely, that however the fancy may be amused with the description of regions in which no wind is heard but the gentle zephyr, and no scenes are displayed but valleys enamelled with unfading flowers, and woods waving their perennial verdure, we should soon grow weary of uniformity, find our thoughts languish for want of other subjects, call on heaven for our wonted round of seasons, and think ourselves liberally recompenced for the inconveniences of summer and winter, by new perceptions of the calmness and mildness of the intermediate variations.

Every season has its particular power of striking the mind. The nakedness and asperity of the wintry world always fill the beholder with pensive and profound astonishment; as the variety of the scene is lessened, its grandeur is increased; and the mind is swelled at once by the mingled ideas of the present and the past, of the beauties which have vanished from the eyes, and the waste and desolation that are now before them.

It is observed by Milton, that he who neglects to visit the country in spring, and rejects the pleasures that are then in their first bloom and fragrance, is guilty of *sullenness against nature*. If we allot different duties to different seasons, he may be charged with equal disobedience to the voice of nature, who looks on the bleak hills and

leafless woods, without seriousness and awe. Spring is the season of gaiety, and winter of terrour; in spring the heart of tranquillity dances to the melody of the groves, and the eye of benevolence sparkles at the sight of happiness and plenty: in the winter, compassion melts at universal calamity, and the tear of softness starts at the wailings of hunger, and the cries of the creation in distress.

Few minds have much inclination to indulge heaviness and sorrow, nor do I recommend them beyond the degree necessary to maintain in its full vigour that habitual sympathy and tenderness, which, in a world of so much misery, is necessary to the ready discharge of our most important duties. The winter, therefore, is generally celebrated as the proper season for domestick merriment and gaiety. We are seldom invited by the votaries of pleasure to look abroad for any other purpose, than that we may shrink back with more satisfaction to our coverts, and when we have heard the howl of the tempest, and felt the gripe of the frost, congratulate each other with more gladness upon a close room, an easy chair, a large fire, and a smoaking dinner.

Winter brings natural inducements to jollity and conversation. Differences, we know, are never so effectually laid asleep, as by some common calamity: an enemy unites all to whom he threatens danger. The rigour of winter brings generally to the same fire-side, those, who, by the opposition of inclinations, or difference of employment, moved in various directions through the other parts of the year; and when they have met, and find it their mutual interest to remain together, they endear each other by mutual compliances, and often wish for the continuance of the social season, with all its bleakness and all its severities.

To the men of study and imagination the winter is generally the chief time of labour. Gloom and silence produce composure of mind, and concentration of ideas; and the privation of external pleasure naturally causes an effort to find entertainment within. This is the time in

which those whom literature enables to find amusements for themselves, have more than common convictions of their own happiness. When they are condemned by the elements to retirement, and debarred from most of the diversions which are called in to assist the flight of time, they can find new subjects of inquiry, and preserve themselves from that weariness which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind.

It cannot indeed be expected of all to be poets and philosophers; it is necessary that the greater part of mankind should be employed in the minute business of common life; minute, indeed, not if we consider its influence upon our happiness, but if we respect the abilities requisite to conduct it. These must necessarily be more dependent on accident for the means of spending agreeably those hours which their occupations leave unengaged, or nature obliges them to allow to relaxation. Yet even on these I would willingly impress such a sense of the value of time, as may incline them to find out for their careless hours amusements of more use and dignity than the common games, which not only weary the mind without improving it, but strengthen the passions of envy and avarice, and often lead to fraud and to profusion, to corruption and to ruin. It is unworthy of a reasonable being to spend any of the little time allotted us, without some tendency, either direct or oblique, to the end of our existence. And though every moment cannot be laid out on the formal and regular improvement of our knowledge, or in the stated practice of a moral or religious duty, yet none should be so spent as to exclude wisdom or virtue, or pass without possibility of qualifying us more or less for the better employment of those which are to come.

It is scarcely possible to pass an hour in honest conversation, without being able, when we rise from it, to please ourselves with having given or received some advantages; but a man may shuffle cards, or rattle dice, from noon to midnight, without tracing any new idea in his mind, or being able to recollect the day by any other

token than his gain or loss, and a confused remembrance of agitated passions, and clamorous altercations.

However, as experience is of more weight than precept, any of my readers, who are contriving how to spend the dreary months before them, may consider which of their past amusements fills them now with the greatest satisfaction, and resolve to repeat those gratifications of which the pleasure is most durable.

N° 81. Tuesday, *December* 25, 1750.

Discite Justitiam moniti——Virg.

Hear, and be just.

Among questions which have been discussed, without any approach to decision, may be numbered the precedency or superiour excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment, and who have, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for its advancement, and diligence in its celebration.

The intricacy of this dispute may be alledged as a proof of that tenderness for mankind which Providence has, I think, universally displayed, by making attainments easy in proportion as they are necessary. That all the duties of morality ought to be practised, is without difficulty discoverable, because ignorance or uncertainty would immediately involve the world in confusion and distress; but which duty ought to be most esteemed, we may continue to debate without inconvenience, so all be diligently performed as there is opportunity or need: for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happiness of mankind; and controversies, merely speculative, are of small importance in themselves, however they may have sometimes heated a disputant, or provoked a faction.

Of the Divine Author of our religion it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories, without observing how little he favoured the vanity of inquisitiveness; how much more rarely he condescended to satisfy curiosity, than to relieve distress; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles, and the direction of daily conduct, without ostentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, such as well-meaning simplicity may readily conceive, and of which we cannot mistake the meaning, but when we are afraid to find it.

The measure of justice prescribed to us, in our transactions with others, is remarkably clear and comprehensive: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them:* a law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted as far as the private conscience requires to be informed; a law, of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications than honesty of intention, and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists, which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this universal principle, they have enquired whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, be bound to gratify them in another. But surely there needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the desires, which are to be considered by us as the measure of right, must be such as we approve, and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it our duty to resist and suppress.

One of the most celebrated cases which have been produced as requiring some skill in the direction of conscience to adapt them to this great rule, is that of a criminal asking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know, that if he was in the state of the supplicant, he should desire that pardon

which he now denies. The difficulty of this sophism will vanish, if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one side the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magistrate is only the minister, and by which he is intrusted with the publick safety. The magistrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the trust with which he is invested, gives away what is not his own, and, apparently, does to others what he would not that others should do to him. Even the community, whose right is still greater to arbitrary grants of mercy, is bound by those laws which regard the great republick of mankind, and cannot justify such forbearance as may promote wickedness, and lessen the general confidence and security in which all have an equal interest, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reason the state has not a right to erect a general sanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to such as have forfeited their lives by crimes against the laws of common morality equally acknowledged by all nations, because no people can, without infraction of the universal league of social beings, incite, by prospects of impunity and safety, those practices in another dominion, which they would themselves punish in their own.

One occasion of uncertainty and hesitation, in those by whom this great rule has been commented and dilated, is the confusion of what the exacter casuists are careful to distinguish, *debts of justice*, and *debts of charity*. The immediate and primary intention of this precept, is to establish a rule of justice; and I know not whether invention, or sophistry, can start a single difficulty to retard its application, when it is thus expressed and explained, *let every man allow the claim of right in another, which he should think himself entitled to make in the like circumstances.*

The discharge of the *debts of charity*, or duties which we owe to others, not merely as required by justice, but as dictated by benevolence, admits in its own nature greater complication of circumstances, and greater latitude of

choice. Justice is indispensably and universally necessary, and what is necessary must always be limited, uniform, and distinct. But beneficence, though in general equally enjoined by our religion, and equally needful to the conciliation of the Divine favour, is yet, for the most part, with regard to its single acts, elective and voluntary. We may certainly, without injury to our fellow-beings, allow in the distribution of kindness something to our affections, and change the measure of our liberality, according to our opinions and prospects, our hopes and fears. This rule therefore is not equally determinate and absolute, with respect to offices of kindness, and acts of liberality, because liberality and kindness, absolutely determined, would lose their nature; for how could we be called tender, or charitable, for giving that which we are positively forbidden to withhold?

Yet, even in adjusting the extent of our beneficence, no other measure can be taken than this precept affords us, for we can only know what others suffer for want, by considering how we should be affected in the same state; nor can we proportion our assistance by any other rule than that of doing what we should then expect from others. It indeed generally happens that the giver and receiver differ in their opinions of generosity; the same partiality to his own interest inclines one to large expectations, and the other to sparing distributions. Perhaps the infirmity of human nature will scarcely suffer a man groaning under the pressure of distress, to judge rightly of the kindness of his friends, or think they have done enough till his deliverance is completed; not therefore what we might wish, but what we could demand from others, we are obliged to grant, since, though we can easily know how much we might claim, it is impossible to determine what we should hope.

But in all inquiries concerning the practice of voluntary and occasional virtues, it is safest for minds not oppressed with superstitious fears to determine against their own inclinations, and secure themselves from deficiency, by doing

more than they believe strictly necessary. For of this every man may be certain, that, if he were to exchange conditions with his dependent, he should expect more than, with the utmost exertion of his ardour, he now will prevail upon himself to perform; and when reason has no settled rule, and our passions are striving to mislead us, it is surely the part of a wise man to err on the side of safety.

N° 82. SATURDAY, *December* 29, 1750.

Omnia Castor emit, sic fiet ut omnia vendat.—MART.

Who buys without discretion, buys to sell.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT will not be necessary to solicit your good-will by any formal preface, when I have informed you, that I have long been known as the most laborious and zealous virtuoso that the present age has had the honour of producing, and that inconveniencies have been brought upon me by an unextinguishable ardour of curiosity, and an unshaken perseverance in the acquisition of the productions of art and nature.

It was observed, from my entrance into the world, that I had something uncommon in my disposition, and that there appeared in me very early tokens of superiour genius. I was always an enemy to trifles; the playthings which my mother bestowed upon me I immediately broke, that I might discover the method of their structure, and the causes of their motions; of all the toys with which children are delighted I valued only my coral, and as soon as I could speak, asked, like Peiresc, innumerable questions which the maids about me could not resolve. As I grew older I was more thoughtful and serious, and instead of amusing myself with puerile diversions, made collections of natural rarities, and never walked into the fields without bringing home stones of remarkable forms, or in-

sects of some uncommon species. I never entered an old house, from which I did not take away the painted glass, and often lamented that I was not one of that happy generation who demolished the convents and monasteries, and broke windows by law.

Being thus early possessed by a taste for solid knowledge, I passed my youth with very little disturbance from passions and appetites; and having no pleasure in the company of boys and girls, who talked of plays, politicks, fashions, or love, I carried on my inquiries with incessant diligence, and had amassed more stones, mosses, and shells, than are to be found in many celebrated collections, at an age in which the greatest part of young men are studying under tutors, or endeavouring to recommend themselves to notice by their dress, their air, and their levities.

When I was two-and-twenty years old, I became, by the death of my father, possessed of a small estate in land, with a very large sum of money in the publick funds, and must confess that I did not much lament him, for he was a man of mean parts, bent rather upon growing rich than wise. He once fretted at the expence of only ten shillings, which he happened to overhear me offering for the sting of a hornet, though it was a cold moist summer, in which very few hornets had been seen. He often recommended to me the study of physick, in which, said he, you may at once gratify your curiosity after natural history, and increase your fortune by benefiting mankind. I heard him, Mr. Rambler, with pity, and as there was no prospect of elevating a mind formed to grovel, suffered him to please himself with hoping that I should some time follow his advice. For you know that there are men, with whom, when they have once settled a notion in their heads, it is to very little purpose to dispute.

Being now left wholly to my own inclinations, I very soon enlarged the bounds of my curiosity, and contented myself no longer with such rarities as required only judgment and industry, and when once found might be had

for nothing. I now turned my thoughts to exoticks and antiques, and became so well known for my generous patronage of ingenious men, that my levee was crowded with visitants, some to see my museum, and others to increase its treasures, by selling me whatever they had brought from other countries.

I had always a contempt for that narrowness of conception, which contents itself with cultivating some single corner of the field of science; I took the whole region into my view, and wished it of yet greater extent. But no man's power can be equal to his will. I was forced to proceed by slow degrees, and to purchase what chance or kindness happened to present. I did not, however, proceed without some design, or imitate the indiscretion of those, who begin a thousand collections, and finish none. Having been always a lover of geography, I determined to collect the maps drawn in the rude and barbarous times, before any regular surveys, or just observations; and have, at a great expence, brought together a volume, in which, perhaps, not a single country is laid down according to its true situation, and by which, he that desires to know the errours of the ancient geographers may be amply informed.

But my ruling passion is patriotism: my chief care has been to procure the products of our own country; and as Alfred received the tribute of the Welsh in wolves' heads, I allowed my tenants to pay their rents in butterflies, till I had exhausted the papilionaceous tribe. I then directed them to the pursuit of other animals, and obtained, by this easy method, most of the grubs and insects, which land, air, or water, can supply. I have three species of earthworms not known to the naturalists, have discovered a new ephemera, and can shew four wasps that were taken torpid in their winter quarters. I have, from my own ground, the longest blade of grass upon record, and once accepted, as a half year's rent for a field of wheat, an ear containing more grains than had been seen before upon a single stem.

One of my tenants so much neglected his own interest, as to supply me, in a whole summer, with only two horse-flies, and those of little more than the common size; and I was upon the brink of seizing for arrears, when his good fortune threw a white mole in his way, for which he was not only forgiven, but rewarded.

These, however, were petty acquisitions, and made at small expence; nor should I have ventured to rank myself among the virtuosi without better claims. I have suffered nothing worthy the regard of a wise man to escape my notice: I have ransacked the old and the new world, and been equally attentive to past ages and the present. For the illustration of ancient history, I can shew a marble, of which the inscription, though it is not now legible, appears, from some broken remains of the letters, to have been Tuscan, and therefore probably engraved before the foundation of Rome. I have two pieces of porphyry found among the ruins of Ephesus, and three letters broken off by a learned traveller from the monuments of Persepolis; a piece of stone which paved the Areopagus of Athens, and a plate without figures or characters, which was found at Corinth, and which I therefore believe to be that metal which was once valued before gold. I have sand gathered out of the Granicus; a fragment of Trajan's bridge over the Danube; some of the mortar which cemented the water-course of Tarquin; a horseshoe broken on the Flaminian way; and a turf with five daisies dug from the field of Pharsalia.

I do not wish to raise the envy of unsuccessful collectors, by too pompous a display of my scientifick wealth, but cannot forbear to observe, that there are few regions of the globe which are not honoured with some memorial in my cabinets. The Persian monarchs are said to have boasted the greatness of their empire, by being served at their tables with drink from the Ganges and the Danube: I can shew one vial, of which the water was formerly an icicle on the crags of Caucasus, and another that contains what once was snow on the top of Atlas; in a third is dew

brushed from a banana in the gardens of Ispahan; and, in another, brine that has rolled in the Pacifick ocean. I flatter myself that I am writing to a man who will rejoice at the honour which my labours have procured to my country; and therefore I shall tell you that Britain can, by my care, boast of a snail that has crawled upon the wall of China; a humming bird which an American princess wore in her ear; the tooth of an elephant who carried the queen of Siam; the skin of an ape that was kept in the palace of the great mogul; a ribbon that adorned one of the maids of a Turkish sultana; and a scymitar once wielded by a soldier of Abas the great.

In collecting antiquities of every country, I have been careful to choose only by intrinsick worth, and real usefulness, without regard to party or opinions. I have therefore a lock of Cromwell's hair in a box turned from a piece of the royal oak; and keep in the same drawers, sand scraped from the coffin of king Richard, and a commission signed by Henry the Seventh. I have equal veneration for the ruff of Elizabeth and the shoe of Mary of Scotland; and should lose, with like regret, a tobacco-pipe of Raleigh, and a stirrup of king James. I have paid the same price for a glove of Lewis, and a thimble of queen Mary; for a fur cap of the Czar, and a boot of Charles of Sweden.

You will easily imagine that these accumulations were not made without some diminution of my fortune, for I was so well known to spare no cost, that at every sale some bid against me for hire, some for sport, and some for malice; and if I asked the price of any thing, it was sufficient to double the demand. For curiosity, trafficking thus with avarice, the wealth of India had not been enough; and I, by little and little, transferred all my money from the funds to my closet: here I was inclined to stop, and live upon my estate in literary leisure, but the sale of the Harleian collection shook my resolution: I mortgaged my land, and purchased thirty medals, which I could never find before. I have at length bought till I can buy no longer, and the cruelty of my creditors has

seized my repository; I am therefore condemned to disperse what the labour of an age will not re-assemble. I submit to that which cannot be opposed, and shall, in a short time, declare a sale. I have, while it is yet in my power, sent you a pebble, picked up by Tavernier on the banks of the Ganges; for which I desire no other recompence than that you will recommend my catalogue to the publick.

QUISQUILIUS.

N° 83. TUESDAY, *January* 1, 1751.

Nisi utile est quod facias, stulta est gloria.—PHÆD.

All useless science is an empty boast.

THE publication of the letter in my last paper has naturally led me to the consideration of thirst after curiosities, which often draws contempt and ridicule upon itself, but which is perhaps no otherwise blameable, than as it wants those circumstantial recommendations which add lusture even to moral excellencies, and are absolutely necessary to the grace and beauty of indifferent actions.

Learning confers so much superiority on those who possess it, that they might probably have escaped all censure had they been able to agree among themselves; but as envy and competition have divided the republick of letters into factions, they have neglected the common interest: each has called in foreign aid, and endeavoured to strengthen his own cause by the frown of power, the hiss of ignorance, and the clamour of popularity. They have all engaged in feuds, till by mutual hostilities they demolished those outworks which veneration had raised for their security, and exposed themselves to barbarians, by whom every region of science is equally laid waste.

Between men of different studies and professions, may be observed a constant reciprocation of reproaches. The collector of shells and stones derides the folly of him who

pastes leaves and flowers upon paper, pleases himself with colours that are perceptibly fading, and amasses with care what cannot be preserved. The hunter of insects stands amazed that any man can waste his short time upon lifeless matter, while many tribes of animals yet want their history. Every one is inclined not only to promote his own study, but to exclude all others from regard, and having heated his imagination with some favourite pursuit, wonders that the rest of mankind are not seized with the same passion.

There are, indeed, many subjects of study which seem but remotely allied to useful knowledge, and of little importance to happiness or virtue; nor is it easy to forbear some sallies of merriment, or expressions of pity, when we see a man wrinkled with attention, and emaciated with solicitude, in the investigation of questions, of which, without visible inconvenience, the world may expire in ignorance. Yet it is dangerous to discourage well-intended labours, or innocent curiosity; for he who is employed in searches, which by any deduction of consequences tend to the benefit of life, is surely laudable, in comparison of those who spend their time in counteracting happiness, and filling the world with wrong and danger, confusion and remorse. No man can perform so little as not to have reason to congratulate himself on his merits, when he beholds the multitudes that live in total idleness, and have never yet endeavoured to be useful.

It is impossible to determine the limits of inquiry, or to foresee what consequences a new discovery may produce. He who suffers not his faculties to lie torpid, has a chance, whatever be his employment, of doing good to his fellow-creatures. The man that first ranged the woods in search of medicinal springs, or climbed the mountains for salutary plants, has undoubtedly merited the gratitude of posterity, how much soever his frequent miscarriages might excite the scorn of his contemporaries. If what appears little be universally despised, nothing greater can be attained, for all that is great was at first little, and rose to

its present bulk by gradual accessions, and accumulated labours.

Those who lay out time or money in assembling matter for contemplation, are doubtless entitled to some degree of respect, though in a flight of gaiety it be easy to ridicule their treasure, or in a fit of sullenness to despise it. A man who thinks only on the particular object before him, goes not away much illuminated by having enjoyed the privilege of handling the tooth of a shark, or the paw of a white bear; yet there is nothing more worthy of admiration to a philosophical eye than the structure of animals, by which they are qualified to support life in the elements or climates to which they are appropriated; and of all natural bodies it must be generally confessed, that they exhibit evidences of infinite wisdom, bear their testimony to the supreme reason, and excite in the mind new raptures of gratitude, and new incentives to piety.

To collect the productions of art, and examples of mechanical science or manual ability, is unquestionably useful, even when the things themselves are of small importance, because it is always advantageous to know how far the human powers have proceeded, and how much experience has found to be within the reach of diligence. Idleness and timidity often despair without being overcome, and forbear attempts for fear of being defeated; and we may promote the invigoration of faint endeavours, by shewing what has been already performed. It may sometimes happen that the greatest efforts of ingenuity have been exerted in trifles; yet the same principles and expedients may be applied to more valuable purposes, and the movements, which put into action machines of no use but to raise the wonder of ignorance, may be employed to drain fens, or manufacture metals, to assist the architect, or preserve the sailor.

For the utensils, arms, or dresses of foreign nations, which make the greatest part of many collections, I have little regard when they are valued only because they are foreign, and can suggest no improvement of our own

practice. Yet they are not all equally useless, nor can it be always safely determined which should be rejected or retained: for they may sometimes unexpectedly contribute to the illustration of history, and to the knowledge of the natural commodities of the country, or of the genius and customs of its inhabitants.

Rarities there are of yet a lower rank, which owe their worth merely to accident, and which can convey no information, nor satisfy any rational desire. Such are many fragments of antiquity, as urns and pieces of pavement; and things held in veneration only for having been once the property of some eminent person, as the armour of king Henry; or for having been used on some remarkable occasion, as the lantern of Guy Faux. The loss or preservation of these seems to be a thing indifferent, nor can I perceive why the possession of them should be coveted. Yet, perhaps, even this curiosity is implanted by nature; and when I find Tully confessing of himself, that he could not forbear at Athens to visit the walks and houses which the old philosophers had frequented or inhabited, and recollect the reverence which every nation, civil and barbarous, has paid to the ground where merit has been buried, I am afraid to declare against the general voice of mankind, and am inclined to believe, that this regard, which we involuntarily pay to the meanest relique of a man great and illustrious, is intended as an incitement to labour, and an encouragement to expect the same renown, if it be sought by the same virtues.

The virtuoso, therefore, cannot be said to be wholly useless; but perhaps he may be sometimes culpable for confining himself to business below his genius, and losing, in petty speculations, those hours by which, if he had spent them in nobler studies, he might have given new light to the intellectual world. It is never without grief, that I find a man capable of ratiocination or invention enlisting himself in this secondary class of learning; for when he has once discovered a method of gratifying his desire of eminence by expence rather than by labour, and

known the sweets of a life blest at once with the ease of idleness, and the reputation of knowledge, he will not easily be brought to undergo again the toil of thinking, or leave his toys and trinkets for arguments and principles, arguments which require circumspection and vigilance, and principles which cannot be obtained but by the drudgery of meditation. He will gladly shut himself up for ever with his shells and metals, like the companions of Ulysses, who, having tasted the fruit of Lotos, would not, even by the hope of seeing their own country, be tempted again to the dangers of the sea.

Ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ βούλοντο μετ' ἄνδρασι Λωτοφάγοισι,
Λωτὸν ἐρεπτόμενοι μένεμεν νόστου τε λάθεσθαι.

——Whoso tastes,
Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts;
Nor other home nor other care intends,
But quits his house, his country, and his friends.—Pope.

Collections of this kind are of use to the learned, as heaps of stones and piles of timber are necessary to the architect. But to dig the quarry or to search the field, requires not much of any quality beyond stubborn perseverance; and though genius must often lie unactive without this humble assistance, yet this can claim little praise, because every man can afford it.

To mean understandings, it is sufficient honour to be numbered amongst the lowest labourers of learning; but different abilities must find different tasks. To hew stone, would have been unworthy of Palladio; and to have rambled in search of shells and flowers, had but ill suited with the capacity of Newton.

N° 84. SATURDAY, *January* 5, 1751.

Cunarum fueras motor, Charideme, mearum,
Et pueri custos, assiduusque comes.
Jam mihi nigrescunt tonsâ sudaria barbâ,——
Sed tibi non crevi: te noster villicus horret:
Te dispensator, te domus ipsa pavet.
Corripis, observas, quereris, suspiria ducis,
Et vix a ferulis abstinet ira manum.—MART.

You rock'd my cradle, were my guide
In youth, still tending at my side:
But now, dear sir, my beard is grown,
Still I'm a child to thee alone.
Our steward, butler, cook, and all
You fright, nay, e'en the very wall;
You pry, and frown, and growl, and chide,
And scarce will lay the rod aside.—F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU seem in all your papers to be an enemy to tyranny, and to look with impartiality upon the world; I shall therefore lay my case before you, and hope by your decision to be set free from unreasonable restraints, and enabled to justify myself against the accusations which spite and peevishness produce against me.

At the age of five years I lost my mother, and my father, being not qualified to superintend the education of a girl, committed me to the care of his sister, who instructed me with the authority, and, not to deny her what she may justly claim, with the affection of a parent. She had not very elevated sentiments or extensive views, but her principles were good, and her intentions pure; and, though some may practise more virtues, scarce any commit fewer faults.

Under this good lady, I learned all the common rules of decent behaviour, and standing maxims of domestick prudence; and might have grown up by degrees to a country gentlewoman, without any thoughts of ranging beyond the neighbourhood, had not Flavia come down,

last summer, to visit her relations in the next village. I was taken, of course, to compliment the stranger, and was, at the first sight, surprized at the unconcern with which she saw herself gazed at by the company whom she had never known before; at the carelessness with which she received compliments, and the readiness with which she returned them. I found she had something which I perceived myself to want, and could not but wish to be like her, at once easy and officious, attentive and unembarrassed. I went home, and for four days could think and talk of nothing but Miss Flavia; though my aunt told me, that she was a forward slut, and thought herself wise before her time.

In a little time she repaid my visit, and raised in my heart a new confusion of love and admiration. I soon saw her again, and still found new charms in her air, conversation, and behaviour. You, who have perhaps seen the world, may have observed, that formality soon ceases between young persons. I know not how others are affected on such occasions, but I found myself irresistibly allured to friendship and intimacy, by the familiar complaisance and airy gaiety of Flavia; so that in a few weeks I became her favourite, and all the time was passed with me, that she could gain from ceremony and visit.

As she came often to me, she necessarily spent some hours with my aunt, to whom she paid great respect by low courtesies, submissive compliance, and soft acquiescence; but as I became gradually more accustomed to her manners, I discovered that her civility was general; that there was a certain degree of deference shewn by her to circumstances and appearances; that many went away flattered by her humility, whom she despised in her heart; that the influence of far the greatest part of those with whom she conversed ceased with their presence; and that sometimes she did not remember the names of them, whom, without any intentional insincerity or false commendation, her habitual civility had sent away with very high thoughts of their own importance.

It was not long before I perceived, that my aunt's opinion was not of much weight in Flavia's deliberations, and that she was looked upon by her as a woman of narrow sentiments, without knowledge of books, or observations on mankind. I had hitherto considered my aunt, as entitled by her wisdom and experience to the highest reverence, and could not forbear to wonder that any one so much younger should venture to suspect her of errour, or ignorance; but my surprize was without uneasiness, and being now accustomed to think Flavia always in the right, I readily learned from her to trust my own reason, and to believe it possible, that they who had lived longer might be mistaken.

Flavia had read much, and used so often to converse on subjects of learning, that she put all the men in the country to flight, except the old parson, who declared himself much delighted with her company, because she gave him opportunities to recollect the studies of his younger years, and, by some mention of ancient story, had made him rub the dust off his Homer, which had lain unregarded in his closet. With Homer, and a thousand other names familiar to Flavia, I had no acquaintance, but began, by comparing her accomplishments with my own, to repine at my education, and wish that I had not been so long confined to the company of those from whom nothing but housewifery was to be learned. I then set myself to peruse such books as Flavia recommended, and heard her opinion of their beauties and defects. I saw new worlds hourly bursting upon my mind, and was enraptured at the prospect of diversifying life with endless entertainment.

The old lady finding that a large screen, which I had undertaken to adorn with turkey-work against winter, made very slow advances, and that I had added in two months but three leaves to a flowered apron then in the frame, took the alarm, and with all the zeal of honest folly exclaimed against my new acquaintance, who had filled me with idle notions, and turned my head with

books. But she had now lost her authority, for I began to find innumerable mistakes in her opinions, and improprieties in her language; and therefore thought myself no longer bound to pay much regard to one who knew little beyond her needle and her dairy, and who professed to think that nothing more is required of a woman than to see that the house is clean, and that the maids go to bed and rise at a certain hour.

She seemed however to look upon Flavia as seducing me, and to imagine that when her influence was withdrawn, I should return to my allegiance; she therefore contented herself with remote hints, and gentle admonitions, intermixed with sage histories of the miscarriages of wit, and disappointments of pride. But since she has found, that though Flavia is departed, I still persist in my new scheme, she has at length lost her patience, she snatches my book out of my hand, tears my paper if she finds me writing, burns Flavia's letters before my face, when she can seize them, and threatens to lock me up, and to complain to my father of my perverseness. If women, she says, would but know their duty and their interest, they would be careful to acquaint themselves with family affairs, and many a penny might be saved; for while the mistress of the house is scribbling and reading, servants are junketing, and linen is wearing out. She then takes me round the rooms, shews me the worked hangings, and chairs of tent-stitch, and asks whether all this was done with a pen and a book.

I cannot deny that I sometimes laugh and sometimes am sullen; but she has not delicacy enough to be much moved either with my mirth or my gloom, if she did not think the interest of the family endangered by this change of my manners. She had for some years marked out young Mr. Surly, an heir in the neighbourhood, remarkable for his love of fighting-cocks, as an advantageous match; and was extremely pleased with the civilities which he used to pay me, till under Flavia's tuition I learned to talk of subjects which he could not understand. This, she says, is the consequence of female study: girls

grow too wise to be advised, and too stubborn to be commanded; but she is resolved to try who shall govern, and will thwart my humour till she breaks my spirit.

These menaces, Mr. Rambler, sometimes make me quite angry; for I have been sixteen these ten weeks, and think myself exempted from the dominion of a governess, who has no pretensions to more sense or knowledge than myself. I am resolved, since I am as tall and as wise as other women, to be no longer treated like a girl. Miss Flavia has often told me, that ladies of my age go to assemblies and routs, without their mothers and their aunts; I shall, therefore, from this time, leave asking advice, and refuse to give accounts. I wish you would state the time at which young ladies may judge for themselves, which I am sure you cannot but think ought to begin before sixteen; if you are inclined to delay it longer, I shall have very little regard to your opinion.

My aunt often tells me of the advantages of experience, and of the deference due to seniority; and both she and all the antiquated part of the world, talk of the unreserved obedience which they paid to the commands of their parents, and the undoubting confidence with which they listened to their precepts; of the terrours which they felt at a frown, and the humility with which they supplicated forgiveness whenever they had offended. I cannot but fancy that this boast is too general to be true, and that the young and the old were always at variance. I have, however, told my aunt, that I will mend whatever she will prove to be wrong; but she replies that she has reasons of her own, and that she is sorry to live in an age when girls have the impudence to ask for proofs.

I beg once again, Mr. Rambler, to know whether I am not as wise as my aunt, and whether, when she presumes to check me as a baby, I may not pluck up a spirit and return her insolence. I shall not proceed to extremities without your advice, which is therefore impatiently expected by

MYRTILLA.

P. S. Remember I am past sixteen.

N° 85. Tuesday, *January* 8, 1751.

Otia si tollas, periere Cupidinis arcus.
Contemptæque jacent, et sine luce faces.—Ovid.

At busy hearts in vain Love's arrows fly;
Dimm'd, scorn'd, and impotent his torches lie.

Many writers of eminence in physic have laid out their diligence upon the consideration of those distempers to which men are exposed by particular states of life, and very learned treatises have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the sea, and the mines. There are, indeed, few employments which a man accustomed to anatomical inquiries, and medical refinements, would not find reasons for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning or experience inform him, that almost every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and safer than a life of sloth.

The necessity of action is not only demonstrable from the fabrick of the body, but evident from observation of the universal practice of mankind, who, for the preservation of health, in those whose rank or wealth exempts them from the necessity of lucrative labour, have invented sports and diversions, though not of equal use to the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to those who practise them, and differing only from the drudgery of the husbandman or manufacturer, as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful sense of compulsion. The huntsman rises early, pursues his game through all the dangers and obstructions of the chace, swims rivers, and scales precipices, till he returns home no less harassed than the soldier, and has perhaps sometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds or death: yet he has no motive to incite his ardour; he is neither subject to the commands of a general, nor dreads any penalties for neglect and disobedience; he has neither profit nor honour to expect from his perils and his con-

quests, but toils without the hope of mural or civick garlands, and must content himself with the praise of his tenants and companions.

But such is the constitution of man, that labour may be styled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requisite, if it be considered how much happiness is gained, and how much misery escaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Ease is the most that can be hoped from a sedentary and unactive habit; ease, a neutral state between pain and pleasure. The dance of spirits, the bound of vigour, readiness of enterprize, and defiance of fatigue, are reserved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent exposure fortifies his frame against the common accidents of cold and heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secured, many would be content; but nothing terrestrial can be kept at a stand. Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain; and whatever hope the dreams of speculation may suggest of observing the proportion between nutriment and labour, and keeping the body in a healthy state by supplies exactly equal to its waste, we know that, in effect, the vital powers, unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid; that, as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away slowly with periodical tortures, and which, though they sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed; but while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from heaven, and chronical from ourselves: the dart of death indeed falls from heaven, but

we poison it by our own misconduct: to die is the fate of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly.*

It is necessary to that perfection of which our present state is capable, that the mind and body should both be kept in action; that neither the faculties of the one nor of the other be suffered to grow lax or torpid for want of use; that neither health be purchased by voluntary submission to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the expence of that health, which must enable it either to give pleasure to its possessor, or assistance to others. It is too frequently the pride of students to despise those amusements and recreations, which give to the rest of mankind strength of limbs and cheerfulness of heart. Solitude and contemplation are indeed seldom consistent with such skill in common exercises or sports as is necessary to make them practised with delight, and no man is willing to do that of which the necessity is not pressing and immediate, when he knows that his awkwardness must make him ridiculous.

Ludere qui nescit, campestribus abstinet armis,
Indoctusque pilæ, discive, trochive quiescit,
Ne spissæ risum tollant impunè coronæ.—Hor.

He that's unskilful will not toss a ball,
Nor run, nor wrestle, for he fears the fall;
He justly fears to meet deserv'd disgrace,
And that the ring will hiss the baffled ass.—Creech.

Thus the man of learning is often resigned, almost by his own consent, to languor and pain; and while in the prosecution of his studies he suffers the weariness of labour, is subject by his course of life to the maladies of idleness.

It was, perhaps, from the observation of this mischievous omission in those who are employed about intellectual objects, that Locke has, in his "System of Edu-

* This passage, which is too vaguely expressed, gave rise to some strange mistakes. Dr. Johnson, in a letter upon the subject, more fully explains his meaning. "Chronical disorders, by which we are suspended in tedious torture between life and death, are commonly the effect of our own misconduct and intemperance.—Boswell's Life, vol. iv.

cation," urged the necessity of a trade to men of all ranks and professions, that when the mind is weary with its proper task, it may be relaxed by a slighter attention to some mechanical operation; and that while the vital functions are resuscitated and awakened by vigourous motion, the understanding may be restrained from that vagrance and dissipation, by which it relieves itself after a long intenseness of thought, unless some allurement be presented that may engage application without anxiety.

There is so little reason for expecting frequent conformity to Locke's precept, that it is not necessary to enquire whether the practice of mechanical arts might not give occasion to petty emulation, and degenerate ambition; and whether, if our divines and physicians were taught the lathe and the chisel, they would not think more of their tools than their books; as Nero neglected the care of his empire for his chariot and his fiddle. It is certainly dangerous to be too much pleased with little things; but what is there which may not be perverted? Let us remember how much worse employment might have been found for those hours, which a manual occupation appears to engross; let us compute the profit with the loss, and when we reflect how often a genius is allured from his studies, consider likewise that perhaps by the same attractions he is sometimes withheld from debauchery, or recalled from malice, from ambition, from envy, and from lust.

I have always admired the wisdom of those by whom our female education was instituted, for having contrived, that every woman, of whatever condition, should be taught some arts of manufacture, by which the vacuities of recluse and domestick leisure may be filled up. These arts are more necessary, as the weakness of their sex and the general system of life debar ladies from any employments which, by diversifying the circumstances of men, preserve them from being cankered by the rust of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happiness of the world may be the consequence of this judi-

cious regulation. Perhaps, the most powerful fancy might be unable to figure the confusion and slaughter that would be produced by so many piercing eyes and vivid understandings, turned loose at once upon mankind, with no other business than to sparkle and intrigue, to perplex and to destroy.

For my part, whenever chance brings within my observation a knot of misses busy at their needles, I consider myself as in the school of virtue; and though I have no extraordinary skill in plain work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much satisfaction as their governess, because I regard them as providing a security against the most dangerous ensnarers of the soul, by enabling themselves to exclude idleness from their solitary moments, and, with idleness, her attendant train of passions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, sorrows, and desires. Ovid and Cervantes will inform them that love has no power but over those whom he catches unemployed; and Hector, in the Iliad, when he sees Andromache overwhelmed with terrours, sends her for consolation to the loom and the distaff.

It is certain that any wild wish or vain imagination never takes such firm possession of the mind, as when it is found empty and unoccupied. The old peripatetick principle, that *Nature abhors a vacuum*, may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace any thing, however absurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. Perhaps every man may date the predominance of those desires that disturb his life and contaminate his conscience, from some unhappy hour when too much leisure exposed him to their incursions; for he has lived with little observation either on himself or others, who does not know that to be idle is to be vicious.

N° 86. SATURDAY, *January* 12, 1751.

Legitimumque sonum digitis callemus et aure.—HOR.

By fingers, or by ear, we numbers scan.—ELPHINSTON.

ONE of the ancients has observed, that the burthen of government is increased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predecessors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparison with excellence, and the danger is still greater when that excellence is consecrated by death; when envy and interest cease to act against it, and those passions by which it was at first vilified and opposed, now stand in its defence, and turn their vehemence against honest emulation.

He that succeeds a celebrated writer, has the same difficulties to encounter; he stands under the shade of exalted merit, and is hindered from rising to his natural height, by the interception of those beams which should invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain satisfaction; or perhaps to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the same object.

One of the old poets congratulates himself that he has the untrodden regions of Parnassus before him, and that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten walk, and with all his diligence can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched by his predecessor, the refuse of contempt, or the omissions of negligence. The Macedonian conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that sung like a nightingale, replied with contempt, "that he had heard the nightingale herself;" and the same treatment must every man expect, whose praise is that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midst of these discouraging reflections, I am about to offer to my reader some observations upon "Paradise Lost," and hope, that, however I may fall below the illustrious writer who has so long dictated to

the commonwealth of learning, my attempt may not be wholly useless. There are, in every age, new errours to be rectified, and new prejudices to be opposed. False taste is always busy to mislead those that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller, uncertain of his way, and forsaken by the sun, will be pleased to see a fainter orb arise on the horizon, that may rescue him from total darkness, though with weak and borrowed lustre.

Addison, though he has considered this poem under most of the general topicks of criticism, has barely touched upon the versification; not probably because he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with what minute attention the ancient criticks considered the disposition of syllables, and had himself given hopes of some metrical observations upon the great Roman poet; but being the first who undertook to display the beauties, and point out the defects of Milton, he had many objects at once before him, and passed willingly over those which were most barren of ideas, and required labour, rather than genius.

Yet versification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indispensably necessary to a poet. Every other power by which the understanding is enlightened, or the imagination enchanted, may be exercised in prose. But the poet has this peculiar superiority, that to all the powers which the perfection of every other composition can require he adds the faculty of joining music with reason, and of acting at once upon the senses and the passions. I suppose there are few who do not feel themselves touched by poetical melody, and who will not confess that they are more or less moved by the same thoughts, as they are conveyed by different sounds, and more affected by the same words in one order than in another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal, but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular series of proportionate sounds cannot give delight.

In treating on the versification of Milton, I am desirous to be generally understood, and shall therefore studiously

decline the dialect of grammarians; though, indeed, it is always difficult, and sometimes scarcely possible, to deliver the precepts of an art, without the terms by which the peculiar ideas of that art are expressed, and which had not been invented but because the language already in use was insufficient. If, therefore, I shall sometimes seem obscure, it may be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to a desire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unusual words.

The heroick measure of the English language may be properly considered as pure or mixed. It is pure when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line.

> Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
> But whó can beár th' appróach of cértain fáte.—DRYDEN.
>
> Here love his golden shafts employs, here lights
> His cónstant lámp, and wáves his púrple wíngs,
> Reigns here, and revels; not in the bought smile
> Of hárlots, lóveless, jóyless, únendéar'd.—MILTON.

The accent may be observed, in the second line of Dryden, and the second and fourth line of Milton, to repose upon every second syllable.

The repetition of this sound or percussion at equal times, is the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable, and should therefore be exactly kept in distichs, and generally in the last line of a paragraph, that the ear may rest without any sense of imperfection.

But, to preserve the series of sounds untransposed in a long composition, is not only very difficult, but tiresome and disgusting; for we are soon wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the same cadence. Necessity has therefore enforced the mixed measure, in which some variation of the accents is allowed; this, though it always injures the harmony of the line, considered by itself, yet compensates the loss by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the same sound, and makes us more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure.

Of these mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable instances, and Milton seldom has two pure lines to-

gether, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the musick.

> Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood,
> Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
> The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n,
> Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe,
> *And starry pole: thou also mad'st the night,*
> Maker omnipotent! and thou the day,
> Which we in our appointed work employ'd
> Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
> *And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss,*
> Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
> For us too large; where thy abundance wants
> Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground;
> But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
> To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
> Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
> And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In this passage it will be at first observed, that all the lines are not equally harmonious, and upon a nearer examination it will be found that only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, and the rest are more or less licentious with respect to the accent. In some the accent is equally upon two syllables together, and in both strong. As

> Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, *both stood,*
> *Both turn'd,* and under open sky ador'd
> The God that made both sky, *air, earth,* and heav'n.

In others the accent is equally upon two syllables, but upon both weak.

> ———a race
> To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
> Thy goodness *infinite,* both when we wake,
> *And when* we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In the first pair of syllables the accent may deviate from the rigour of exactness, without any unpleasing diminution of harmony as may be observed in the lines already cited, and more remarkably in this,

> ———Thou also mad'st the night,
> *Maker* omnipotent! and thou the day.

But, excepting in the first pair of syllables, which may be considered as arbitrary, a poet who, not having the invention or knowledge of Milton, has more need to allure his audience by musical cadences, should seldom suffer

more than one aberration from the rule in any single verse.

There are two lines in this passage more remarkably unharmonious:

———This delicious place,
For us too large; *where thy* abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropp'd *falls to* the ground.

Here the third pair of syllables in the first, and fourth pair in the second verse, have their accents retrograde or inverted; the first syllable being strong or acute, and the second weak. The detriment which the measure suffers by this inversion of the accents is sometimes less perceptible, when the verses are carried one into another, but is remarkably striking in this place, where the vicious verse concludes a period, and is yet more offensive in rhyme, when we regularly attend to the flow of every single line. This will appear by reading a couplet in which Cowley, an author not sufficiently studious of harmony, has committed the same fault.

———his harmless life
Does with substantial blessedness abound,
And the soft wings of peace *cover* him round.

In these the law of metre is very grossly violated by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other, as Milton expresses in his sonnet, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than ours, had two kinds of verse, the Iambick, consisting of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroick measure is derived, and Trochaick, consisting in a like alternation of long and short. These were considered as opposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness; to confound them, therefore, as in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But where the senses are to judge, authority is not necessary, the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance, nor should I have sought auxiliaries on such an occasion against any name but that of Milton.

N° 87. TUESDAY, *January* 15, 1751.

Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,
Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,
Si modo culturæ patientem commodet aurem.—HOR.

The slave to envy, anger, wine, or love,
The wretch of sloth, its excellence shall prove;
Fierceness itself shall hear its rage away,
When list'ning calmly to th' instructive lay.—FRANCIS.

THAT few things are so liberally bestowed, or squandered with so little effect, as good advice, has been generally observed; and many sage positions have been advanced concerning the reasons of this complaint, and the means of removing it. It is indeed an important and noble enquiry, for little would be wanting to the happiness of life, if every man could conform to the right as soon as he was shewn it.

This perverse neglect of the most salutary precepts, and stubborn resistance of the most pathetick persuasion, is usually imputed to him by whom the counsel is received, and we often hear it mentioned as a sign of hopeless depravity, that though good advice was given, it has wrought no reformation.

Others, who imagine themselves to have quicker sagacity and deeper penetration, have found out that the inefficacy of advice is usually the fault of the counsellor, and rules have been laid down, by which this important duty may be successfully performed: We are directed by what tokens to discover the favourable moment at which the heart is disposed for the operation of truth and reason, with what address to administer, and with what vehicles to disguise, *the catharticks of the soul.*

But, notwithstanding this specious expedient, we find the world yet in the same state: advice is still given, but still received with disgust; nor has it appeared that the bitterness of the medicine has been yet abated, or its power increased, by any methods of preparing it.

If we consider the manner in which those who assume the office of directing the conduct of others execute their undertaking, it will not be very wonderful that their labours, however zealous or affectionate, are frequently useless. For what is the advice that is commonly given? A few general maxims, enforced with vehemence, and inculcated with importunity, but failing for want of particular reference and immediate application.

It is not often that any man can have so much knowledge of another, as is necessary to make instruction useful. We are sometimes not ourselves conscious of the original motives of our actions, and when we know them, our first care is to hide them from the sight of others, and often from those most diligently, whose superiority either of power or understanding may entitle them to inspect our lives; it is therefore very probable that he who endeavours the cure of our intellectual maladies, mistakes their cause; and that his prescriptions avail nothing, because he knows not which of the passions or desires is vitiated.

Advice, as it always gives a temporary appearance of superiority, can never be very grateful, even when it is most necessary or most judicious. But for the same reason every one is eager to instruct his neighbours. To be wise or to be virtuous, is to buy dignity and importance at a high price; but when nothing is necessary to elevation but detection of the follies or the faults of others, no man is so insensible to the voice of fame as to linger on the ground.

> *—Tentanda via est, quâ me quoque possim*
> *Tollere humo, victorque virûm volitare per ora.*—VIRG.
>
> New ways I must attempt, my grovelling name
> To raise aloft, and wing my flight to fame.—DRYDEN.

Vanity is so frequently the apparent motive of advice, that we, for the most part, summon our powers to oppose it without any very accurate enquiry whether it is right. It is sufficient that another is growing great in his own eyes at our expence, and assumes authority over us without our permission; for many would contentedly suffer

the consequences of their own mistakes, rather than the insolence of him who triumphs as their deliverer.

It is, indeed, seldom found that any advantages are enjoyed with that moderation which the uncertainty of all human good so powerfully enforces; and therefore the adviser may justly suspect, that he has inflamed the opposition which he laments by arrogance and superciliousness. He may suspect, but needs not hastily to condemn himself, for he can rarely be certain that the softest language or most humble diffidence would have escaped resentment; since scarcely any degree of circumspection can prevent or obviate the rage with which the slothful, the impotent, and the unsuccessful, vent their discontent upon those that excel them. Modesty itself, if it is praised, will be envied; and there are minds so impatient of inferiority, that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompence is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain.

The number of those whom the love of themselves has thus far corrupted, is perhaps not great; but there are few so free from vanity, as not to dictate to those who will hear their instructions with a visible sense of their own beneficence; and few to whom it is not unpleasing to receive documents, however tenderly and cautiously delivered, or who are not willing to raise themselves from pupillage, by disputing the propositions of their teacher.

It was the maxim, I think, of Alphonsus of Arragon, that *dead counsellors are safest*. The grave puts an end to flattery and artifice, and the information that we receive from books is pure from interest, fear, or ambition. Dead counsellors are likewise most instructive; because they are heard with patience and with reverence. We are not unwilling to believe that man wiser than ourselves, from whose abilities we may receive advantage, without any danger of rivalry or opposition, and who affords us the light of his experience, without hurting our eyes by flashes of insolence.

By the consultation of books, whether of dead or living

authors, many temptations to petulance and opposition, which occur in oral conferences, are avoided. An author cannot obtrude his service unasked, nor can be often suspected of any malignant intention to insult his readers with his knowledge or his wit. Yet so prevalent is the habit of comparing ourselves with others, while they remain within the reach of our passions, that books are seldom read with complete impartiality, but by those from whom the writer is placed at such a distance that his life or death is indifferent.

We see that volumes may be perused, and perused with attention, to little effect; and that maxims of prudence, or principles of virtue, may be treasured in the memory without influencing the conduct. Of the numbers that pass their lives among books, very few read to be made wiser or better, apply any general reproof of vice to themselves, or try their own manners by axioms of justice. They purpose either to consume those hours for which they can find no other amusement, to gain or preserve that respect which learning has always obtained: or to gratify their curiosity with knowledge, which, like treasures buried and forgotten, is of no use to others or themselves.

"The preacher (says a French author) may spend an hour in explaining and enforcing a precept of religion, without feeling any impression from his own performance, because he may have no further design than to fill up his hour." A student may easily exhaust his life in comparing divines and moralists, without any practical regard to morality or religion; he may be learning not to live, but to reason; he may regard only the elegance of style, justness of argument, and accuracy of method; and may enable himself to criticise with judgment, and dispute with subtilty, while the chief use of his volumes is unthought of, his mind is unaffected, and his life is unreformed.

But though truth and virtue are thus frequently defeated by pride, obstinacy, or folly, we are not allowed to desert them; for whoever can furnish arms which they hitherto have not employed, may enable them to gain some hearts

which would have resisted any other method of attack. Every man of genius has some arts of fixing the attention peculiar to himself, by which, honestly exerted, he may benefit mankind; for the arguments for purity of life fail of their due influence, not because they have been considered and confuted, but because they have been passed over without consideration. To the position of Tully,* that if Virtue could be seen, she must be loved, may be added, that if Truth could be heard, she must be obeyed.

N°. 88. SATURDAY, *January* 19, 1751.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti:
Audebit quæcunque minus splendoris habebunt,
Aut sine pondere erunt, et honore indigna ferentur,
Verba movere loco, quamvis invita recedant,
Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia Vestæ.—HOR.

But he that hath a curious piece designed
When he begins must take a censor's mind,
Severe and honest; and what words appear
Too light and trivial, or too weak to bear
The weighty sense, nor worth the reader's care,
Shake off; tho' stubborn, they are loth to move,
And tho' we fancy, dearly tho' we love.—CREECH.

"THERE is no reputation for genius," says Quintilian, "to be gained by writing on things, which, however necessary, have little splendour or show. The height of a building attracts the eye, but the foundations lie without regard. Yet since there is not any way to the top of science, but from the lowest parts, I shall think nothing unconnected with the art of oratory, which he that wants cannot be an orator."

Confirmed and animated by this illustrious precedent, I shall continue my enquiries into Milton's art of versification. Since, however minute the employment may appear, of analyzing lines into syllables, and whatever ridicule may be incurred by a solemn deliberation upon ac-

* The remark was originally made by Plato, and adopted by Tully.—Vide Cic. Offic. lib. 1. cap. v.—L.

cents and pauses, it is certain that without this petty knowledge no man can be a poet; and that from the proper disposition of single sounds results that harmony that adds force to reason, and gives grace to sublimity; that shackles attention, and governs passions.

That verse may be melodious and pleasing, it is necessary, not only that the words be so ranged as that the accent may fall on its proper place, but that the syllables themselves be so chosen as to flow smoothly into one another. This is to be effected by a proportionate mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semivowels. The Hebrew grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the consonants are less harmonically conjoined, and by consequence, the flow of the verse is longer interrupted.

It is pronounced by Dryden, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, is evidently true, not because monosyllables cannot compose harmony, but because our monosyllables being of Teutonick original, or formed by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as,

——— Every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste.

The difference of harmony arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will be sufficiently conceived by attending to the following passages:

Immortal *Amarant*——there grows
And flow'rs aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
With these that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams.

The same comparison that I propose to be made between the fourth and sixth verses of this passage. may be repeated between the last lines of the following quotations:

Under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich in-lay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

Here in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve first deck'd her nuptial bed;
And heav'nly choirs the hymenean sung.

Milton, whose ear had been accustomed, not only to the musick of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excel all that are now in use, but to the softness of the Italian, the most mellifluous of all modern poetry, seems fully convinced of the unfitness of our language for smooth versification, and is therefore pleased with an opportunity of calling in a softer word to his assistance; for this reason, and I believe for this only, he sometimes indulges himself in a long series of proper names, and introduces them where they add little but musick to his poem.

——— The richer seat
Of *Atabalipa*, and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city *Gerion's* sons
Call *El Dorado*.———

The moon——The *Tuscan* artist views
At evening, from the top of *Fesole*
Or in *Valdarno*, to descry new lands.——

He has indeed been more attentive to his syllables than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants, or openings of vowels upon each other, at least not more often than other writers who have had less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

The great peculiarity of Milton's versification, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As

—— Knowledge
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

This licence, though now disused in English poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many

other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the criticks on "Paradise Lost" have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for continuing it. But one language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the Italians, and the alexandrine of the French; and the elision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the English tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e* which our ancestors added to most of our monosyllables, was once vocal. By this detruncation of our syllables, our language is overstocked with consonants, and it is more necessary to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton therefore seems to have somewhat mistaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is ruggedness and asperity, and has left our harsh cadences yet harsher. But his elisions are not all equally to be censured; in some syllables they may be allowed, and perhaps in a few may be safely imitated. The abscission of a vowel is undoubtedly vicious when it is strongly sounded, and makes, with its associate consonant, a full and audible syllable.

—— What he gives,
Spiritual, may to purest spirits be found,
No ingrateful food, and food alike these pure
Intelligential substances require.
Fruits,——Hesperian fables true,
If true, here *only*, and of delicious taste.
——Evening now approach'd,
For we have *also* our evening and our morn.
Of guests he makes them slaves,
Inhospita*bly*, and kills their infant males.
And vital Virt*ue* infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass.———
God make *thee* of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him.

I believe every reader will agree, that in all those passages, though not equally in all, the musick is injured, and in some the meaning obscured. There are other lines in

which the vowel is cut off, but it is so faintly pronounced in common speech, that the loss of it in poetry is scarcely perceived; and therefore such compliance with the measure may be allowed.

Nature breeds
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abomina*ble*, inutter*able*; and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd———
————From the shore
They view'd the vast immensura*ble* abyss.
Impenetra*ble*, impal'd with circling fire.
To none communica*ble* in earth or heav'n.

Yet even these contractions increase the roughness of a language too rough already; and though in long poems they may be sometimes suffered, it never can be faulty to forbear them.

Milton frequently uses in his poems the hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven syllables.

Thus it shall befall
Him who to worth in woman over trust*ing*
Lets her will rule———
I also err'd in over much admir*ing*.

Verses of this kind occur almost in every page; but though they are not unpleasing or dissonant, they ought not to be admitted into heroick poetry, since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epick and tragick measures, than is afforded by the liberty of changing at will the terminations of the dramatick lines, and bringing them by that relaxation of metrical rigour nearer to prose.

N° 89. TUESDAY, *January* 22, 1751.

Dulce est desipere in loco.——HOR.

Wisdom at proper times is well forgot.

LOCKE, whom there is no reason to suspect of being a favourer of idleness or libertinism, has advanced, that whoever hopes to employ any part of his time with efficacy and vigour, must allow some of it to pass in trifles. It is beyond the powers of humanity to spend a whole life

in profound study and intense meditation, and the most rigorous exactors of industry and seriousness have appointed hours for relaxation and amusement.

It is certain, that, with or without our consent, many of the few moments allotted us will slide imperceptibly away, and that the mind will break, from confinement to its stated task, into sudden excursions. Severe and connected attention is preserved but for a short time; and when a man shuts himself up in his closet, and bends his thoughts to the discussion of any abstruse question, he will find his faculties continually stealing away to more pleasing entertainments. He often perceives himself transported, he knows not how, to distant tracts of thought, and returns to his first object as from a dream, without knowing when he forsook it, or how long he has been abstracted from it.

It has been observed that the most studious are not always the most learned. There is, indeed, no great difficulty in discovering that this difference of proficiency may arise from the difference of intellectual powers, of the choice of books, or the convenience of information. But I believe it likewise frequently happens that the most recluse are not the most vigorous prosecutors of study. Many impose upon the world, and many upon themselves, by an appearance of severe and exemplary diligence, when they, in reality, give themselves up to the luxury of fancy, please their minds with regulating the past, or planning the future; place themselves at will in varied situations of happiness, and slumber away their days in voluntary visions. In the journey of life some are left behind, because they are naturally feeble and slow; some because they miss the way, and many because they leave it by choice, and instead of pressing onward with a steady pace, delight themselves with momentary deviations, turn aside to pluck every flower, and repose in every shade.

There is nothing more fatal to a man whose business is to think, than to have learned the art of regaling his mind with those airy gratifications. Other vices or follies are

restrained by fear, reformed by admonition, or rejected by the conviction which the comparison of our conduct with that of others may in time produce. But this invisible riot of the mind, this secret prodigality of being, is secure from detection, and fearless of reproach. The dreamer retires to his apartments, shuts out the cares and interruptions of mankind, and abandons himself to his own fancy: new worlds rise up before him, one image is followed by another, and a long succession of delights dances round him. He is at last called back to life by nature, or by custom, and enters peevish into society, because he cannot model it to his own will. He returns from his idle excursions with the asperity, though not with the knowledge of a student, and hastens again to the same felicity with the eagerness of a man bent upon the advancement of some favourite science. The infatuation strengthens by degrees, and like the poison of opiates, weakens his powers, without any external symptoms of malignity.

It happens, indeed, that these hypocrites of learning are in time detected, and convinced by disgrace and disappointment of the difference between the labour of thought, and the sport of musing. But this discovery is often not made till it is too late to recover the time that has been fooled away. A thousand accidents may, indeed, awaken drones to a more early sense of their danger and their shame. But they who are convinced of the necessity of breaking from this habitual drowsiness, too often relapse in spite of their resolution; for these ideal seducers are always near, and neither any particularity of time nor place is necessary to their influence; they invade the soul without warning, and have often charmed down resistance before their approach is perceived or suspected.

This captivity, however, it is necessary for every man to break, who has any desire to be wise or useful, to pass his life with the esteem of others, or to look back with satisfaction from his old age upon his earlier years. In order to regain liberty, he must find the means of flying from himself; he must, in opposition to the Stoick precept,

teach his desires to fix upon external things; he must adopt the joys and the pains of others, and excite in his mind the want of social pleasures and amicable communication.

It is, perhaps, not impossible to promote the cure of this mental malady, by close application to some new study, which may pour in fresh ideas, and keep curiosity in perpetual motion. But study requires solitude, and solitude is a state dangerous to those who are too much accustomed to sink into themselves. Active employment or public pleasure is generally a necessary part of this intellectual regimen, without which, though some remission may be obtained, a complete cure will scarcely be effected.

This is a formidable and obstinate disease of the intellect, of which, when it has once become radicated by time, the remedy is one of the hardest tasks of reason and of virtue. Its slightest attacks, therefore, should be watchfully opposed; and he that finds the frigid and narcotick infection beginning to seize him, should turn his whole attention against it, and check it at the first discovery by proper counteraction.

The great resolution to be formed, when happiness and virtue are thus formidably invaded, is, that no part of life, be spent in a state of neutrality or indifference; but that some pleasure be found for every moment that is not devoted to labour; and that, whenever the necessary business of life grows irksome or disgusting, an immediate transition be made to diversion and gaiety.

After the exercises which the health of the body requires, and which have themselves a natural tendency to actuate and invigorate the mind, the most eligible amusement of a rational being seems to be that interchange of thoughts which is practised in free and easy conversation; where suspicion is banished by experience, and emulation by benevolence; where every man speaks with no other restraint than unwillingness to offend, and hears with no other disposition than desire to be pleased.

There must be a time in which every man trifles; and the only choice that nature offers us, is, to trifle in company or alone. To join profit with pleasure, has been an old precept among men who have had very different conceptions of profit. All have agreed that our amusements should not terminate wholly in the present moment, but contribute more or less to future advantage. He that amuses himself among well-chosen companions, can scarcely fail to receive, from the most careless and obstreperous merriment which virtue can allow, some useful hints; nor can converse on the most familiar topicks without some casual information. The loose sparkles of thoughtless wit may give new light to the mind, and the gay contention for paradoxical positions rectify the opinions.

This is the time in which those friendships that give happiness or consolation, relief or security, are generally formed. A wise and good man is never so amiable as in his unbended and familiar intervals. Heroick generosity or philosophical discoveries, may compel veneration and respect, but love always implies some kind of natural or voluntary equality, and is only to be excited by that levity and cheerfulness which disencumber all minds from awe and solicitude, invite the modest to freedom, and exalt the timorous to confidence. This easy gaiety is certain to please, whatever be the character of him that exerts it; if our superiours descend from their elevation, we love them for lessening the distance at which we are placed below them; and inferiours, from whom we can receive no lasting advantage, will always keep our affections while their sprightliness and mirth contribute to our pleasure.

Every man finds himself differently affected by the sight of fortresses of war, and palaces of pleasure; we look on the height and strength of the bulwarks with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, for we cannot think of defence without admitting images of danger; but we range delighted and jocund through the gay apartments of the palace,

because nothing is impressed by them on the mind but joy and festivity. Such is the difference between great and amiable characters; with protectors we are safe, with companions we are happy.

N° 90. SATURDAY, *January* 26, 1751.

In tenui labor.—VIRG.
What toil in slender things!

IT is very difficult to write on the minuter parts of literature without failing either to please or instruct. Too much nicety of detail disgusts the greatest part of readers, and to throw a multitude of particulars under general heads, and lay down rules of extensive comprehension, is to common understandings of little use. They who undertake these subjects are therefore always in danger, as one or other inconvenience arises to their imagination, of frighting us with rugged science, or amusing us with empty sound.

In criticising the work of Milton, there is, indeed, opportunity to intersperse passages that can hardly fail to relieve the languors of attention; and since, in examining the variety and choice of the pauses with which he has diversified his numbers, it will be necessary to exhibit the lines in which they are to be found, perhaps the remarks may be well compensated by the examples, and the irksomeness of grammatical disquisitions somewhat alleviated.

Milton formed his scheme of versification by the poets of Greece and Rome, whom he proposed to himself for his models, so far as the difference of his language from theirs would permit the imitation. There are indeed many inconveniences inseparable from our heroick measure compared with that of Homer and Virgil; inconveniences, which it is no reproach to Milton not to have overcome, because they are in their own nature insuperable; but against which he has struggled with so much

art and diligence, that he may at least be said to have deserved success.

The hexameter of the ancients may be considered as consisting of fifteen syllables, so melodiously disposed, that, as every one knows who has examined the poetical authors, very pleasing and sonorous lyrick measures are formed from the fragments of the heroick. It is, indeed, scarce possible to break them in such a manner but that *invenias etiam disjecti membra poëtæ*, some harmony will still remain, and the due proportions of sound will always be discovered. This measure therefore allowed great variety of pauses, and great liberties of connecting one verse with another, because wherever the line was interrupted, either part singly was musical. But the ancients seem to have confined this privilege to hexameters; for in their other measures, though longer than the English heroick, those who wrote after the refinements of versification, venture so seldom to change their pauses, that every variation may be supposed rather a compliance with necessity than the choice of judgment.

Milton was constrained within the narrow limits of a measure not very harmonious in the utmost perfection; the single parts, therefore, into which it was to be sometimes broken by pauses, were in danger of losing the very form of verse. This has, perhaps, notwithstanding all his care, sometimes happened.

As harmony is the end of poetical measures, no part of a verse ought to be so separated from the rest as not to remain still more harmonious than prose, or to shew, by the disposition of the tones, that it is part of a verse. This rule in the old hexameter might be easily observed, but in English will very frequently be in danger of violation; for the order and regularity of accents cannot well be perceived in a succession of fewer than three syllables, which will confine the English poet to only five pauses; it being supposed, that when he connects one line with another, he should never make a full pause at less distance than that of three syllables from the beginning or end of a verse.

That this rule should be universally and indispensably established, perhaps cannot be granted; something may be allowed to variety, and something to the adaptation of the numbers to the subject; but it will be found generally necessary, and the ear will seldom fail to suffer by its neglect.

Thus when a single syllable is cut off from the rest, it must either be united to the line with which the sense connects it, or be sounded alone. If it be united to the other line, it corrupts its harmony; if disjoined, it must stand alone, and with regard to musick be superfluous; for there is no harmony in a single sound, because it has no proportion to another.

> Hypocrites austerely talk,
> Defaming as impure what God declares
> *Pure*; and commands to some, leaves free to all.

When two syllables likewise are abscinded from the rest, they evidently want some associate sounds to make them harmonious.

> ——Eyes——
> ——more wakeful than to drouze,
> Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed
> Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. *Meanwhile*
> To re-salute the world with sacred light
> Leucothea wak'd.
>
> He ended, and the sun gave signal high
> To the bright minister that watched: *he blew*
> His trúmpet.
>
> First in the east his glorious lamp was seen,
> Regent of day; and all th' horizon round
> Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
> His longitude through heav'n's high road; *the gray*
> Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danc'd,
> Shedding sweet influence.

The same defect is perceived in the following line, where the pause is at the second syllable from the beginning:

> The race
> Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
> In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
> To rapture, 'till the savage clamour drown'd
> Both harp and voice; nor could the muse defend
> *Her son.* So fail not thou, who thee implores.

When the pause falls upon the third syllable or the

seventh, the harmony is better preserved; but as the third and seventh are weak syllables, the period leaves the ear unsatisfied, and in expectation of the remaining part of the verse.

——He, with his horrid crew,
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulph,
Confounded though immor*tal*. But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments *him*.

God,—with frequent intercourse,
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascend*ing*.

It may be, I think, established as a rule, that a pause which concludes a period should be made for the most part upon a strong syllable, as the fourth and sixth; but those pauses which only suspend the sense may be placed upon the weaker. Thus the rest in the third line of the first passage satisfies the ear better than the fourth, and the close of the second quotation better than of the third.

———The evil soon
Drawn back, redounded (as a flood) on those
From whom it *sprung*; impossible to mix
With *blessedness*.

———What we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to *wild*.

The paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist *us*.

The rest in the fifth place has the same inconvenience as in the seventh and third, that the syllable is weak.

Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish, to graze the herb all leaving,
Devour'd each *other*: Nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled *him*, or with countenance grim,
Glar'd on him pass*ing*.

The noblest and most majestick pauses which our versification admits, are upon the fourth and sixth syllables, which are both strongly sounded in a pure and regular

verse, and at either of which the line is so divided, that both members participate of harmony.

But now at last the sacred influence
Of light *appears*, and from the walls of heav'n
Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
A glimmering *dawn*: here nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and chaos to retire.

But far above all others, if I can give any credit to my own ear, is the rest upon the sixth syllable, which, taking in a complete compass of sound, such as is sufficient to constitute one of our lyrick measures, makes a full and solemn close. Some passages which conclude at this stop, I could never read without some strong emotions of delight or admiration.

Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with the eternal wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial *song*.

Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there,
He stay'd not to in*quire*.

———He blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since, perhaps
When God descended; and, perhaps, once more
To sound at general *doom*.

If the poetry of Milton be examined, with regard to the pauses and flow of his verses into each other, it will appear that he has performed all that our language would admit; and the comparison of his numbers with those who have cultivated the same manner of writing, will shew that he excelled as much in the lower as the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not less than his invention or his learning.

N° 91. TUESDAY, *January* 29, 1751.

Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
Expertus metuit.—HOR.

To court the great ones, and to sooth their pride,
Seems a sweet task to those that never tried;
But those that have, know well what danger's near.—CREECH.

THE SCIENCES having long seen their votaries labouring for the benefit of mankind without reward, put up their petition to Jupiter for a more equitable distribution of riches and honours. Jupiter was moved at their complaints, and touched with the approaching miseries of men, whom the SCIENCES, wearied with perpetual ingratitude, were now threatening to forsake, and who would have been reduced by their departure to feed in dens upon the mast of trees, to hunt their prey in deserts, and to perish under the paws of animals stronger and fiercer than themselves.

A synod of the celestials was therefore convened, in which it was resolved, that PATRONAGE should descend to the assistance of the SCIENCES. PATRONAGE was the daughter of ASTREA, by a mortal father, and had been educated in the school of TRUTH, by the Goddesses, whom she was now appointed to protect. She had from her mother that dignity of aspect, which struck terrour into false merit, and from her mistress that reserve, which made her only accessible to those whom the SCIENCES brought into her presence.

She came down with the general acclamation of all the powers that favour learning. HOPE danced before her, and LIBERALITY stood at her side, ready to scatter by her direction the gifts which FORTUNE, who followed her, was commanded to supply. As she advanced towards Parnassus, the cloud which had long hung over it, was immediately dispelled. The shades, before withered with drought, spread their original verdure, and the flowers that had languished with chillness brightened their colours, and invigorated their scents; the Muses tuned their harps,

and exerted their voices; and all the concert of nature welcomed her arrival.

On Parnassus she fixed her residence, in a palace raised by the SCIENCES, and adorned with whatever could delight the eye, elevate the imagination, or enlarge the understanding. Here she dispersed the gifts of FORTUNE with the impartiality of JUSTICE, and the discernment of TRUTH. Her gate stood always open, and HOPE sat at the portal, inviting to entrance all whom the SCIENCES numbered in their train. The court was therefore thronged with innumerable multitudes, of whom, though many returned disappointed, seldom any had confidence to complain; for PATRONAGE was known to neglect few, but for want of the due claims to her regard. Those, therefore, who had solicited her favour without success, generally withdrew from publick notice, and either diverted their attention to meaner employments, or endeavoured to supply their deficiencies by closer application.

In time, however, the number of those who had miscarried in their pretensions grew so great, that they became less ashamed of their repulses; and instead of hiding their disgrace in retirement, began to besiege the gates of the palace, and obstruct the entrance of such as they thought likely to be more caressed. The decisions of PATRONAGE, who was but half a goddess, had been sometimes erroneous; and though she always made haste to rectify her mistakes, a few instances of her fallibility encouraged every one to appeal from her judgment to his own and that of his companions, who are always ready to clamour in the common cause, and elate each other with reciprocal applause.

HOPE was a steady friend of the disappointed, and IMPUDENCE incited them to accept a second invitation, and lay their claim again before PATRONAGE. They were again, for the most part, sent back with ignominy, but found HOPE not alienated, and IMPUDENCE more resolutely zealous; they therefore contrived new expedients, and hoped at last to prevail by their multitudes,

which were always increasing, and their perseverance, which HOPE and IMPUDENCE forbad them to relax.

PATRONAGE having been long a stranger to the heavenly assemblies began to degenerate towards terrestrial nature, and forget the precepts of JUSTICE and TRUTH. Instead of confining her friendship to the SCIENCES, she suffered herself, by little and little, to contract an acquaintance with PRIDE, the son of FALSEHOOD, by whose embraces she had two daughters, FLATTERY and CAPRICE. FLATTERY was nursed by LIBERALITY, and CAPRICE by FORTUNE, without any assistance from the lessons of the SCIENCES.

PATRONAGE began openly to adopt the sentiments and imitate the manners of her husband, by whose opinions she now directed her decisions with very little heed to the precepts of TRUTH; and as her daughters continually gained upon her affections, the SCIENCES lost their influence, till none found much reason to boast of their reception but those whom CAPRICE or FLATTERY conducted to her throne.

The throngs who had so long waited, and so often been dismissed for want of recommendation from the SCIENCES, were delighted to see the power of those rigorous goddesses tending to its extinction. Their patronesses now renewed their encouragements. HOPE smiled at the approach of CAPRICE, and IMPUDENCE was always at hand to introduce her clients to FLATTERY.

PATRONAGE had now learned to procure herself reverence by ceremonies and formalities, and, instead of admitting her petitioners to an immediate audience, ordered the antechamber to be erected, called among mortals, the *Hall of Expectation.* Into this hall the entrance was easy to those whom IMPUDENCE had consigned to FLATTERY, and it was therefore crowded with a promiscuous throng, assembled from every corner of the earth, pressing forward with the utmost eagerness of desire and agitated with all the anxieties of competition.

They entered this general receptacle with ardour and

alacrity, and made no doubt of speedy access, under the conduct of FLATTERY, to the presence of PATRONAGE. But it generally happened that they were left to their destiny, for the inner doors were committed to CAPRICE, who opened and shut them, as it seemed, by chance, and rejected or admitted without any settled rule of distinction. In the mean time, the miserable attendants were left to wear out their lives in alternate exultation and dejection, delivered up to the sport of SUSPICION, who was always whispering into their ear designs against them which were never formed, and of ENVY, who diligently pointed out the good fortune of one or other of their competitors. INFAMY flew round the hall, and scattered mildews from her wings, with which every one was stained; REPUTATION followed her with slower flight, and endeavoured to hide the blemishes with paint, which was immediately brushed away, or separated of itself, and left the stains more visible; nor were the spots of INFAMY ever effaced, but with limpid water effused by the hand of TIME, from a well which sprung up beneath the throne of TRUTH.

It frequently happened that SCIENCE, unwilling to lose the ancient prerogative of recommending to PATRONAGE, would lead her followers into the Hall of Expectation; but they were soon discouraged from attending, for not only ENVY and SUSPICION incessantly tormented them, but IMPUDENCE considered them as intruders, and incited INFAMY to blacken them. They therefore quickly retired, but seldom without some spots which they could scarcely wash away, and which shewed that they had once waited in the Hall of Expectation.

The rest continued to expect the happy moment, at which CAPRICE should beckon them to approach; and endeavoured to propitiate her, not with Homerical harmony, the representation of great actions, or the recital of noble sentiments, but with soft and voluptuous melody, intermingled with the praises of PATRONAGE and PRIDE, by whom they were heard at once with pleasure and contempt.

Some were indeed admitted by CAPRICE, when they least expected it, and heaped by PATRONAGE with the gifts of FORTUNE, but they were from that time chained to her footstool, and condemned to regulate their lives by her glances and her nods: they seemed proud of their manacles, and seldom complained of any drudgery, however servile, or any affront, however contemptuous; yet they were often, notwithstanding their obedience, seized on a sudden by CAPRICE, divested of their ornaments, and thrust back into the Hall of Expectation.

Here they mingled again with the tumult, and all, except a few whom experience had taught to seek happiness in the regions of liberty, continued to spend hours, and days, and years, courting the smile of CAPRICE by the arts of FLATTERY; till at length new crowds pressed in upon them, and drove them forth at different outlets into the habitations of DISEASE, and SHAME, and POVERTY, and DESPAIR, where they passed the rest of their lives in narratives of promises and breaches of faith, of joys and sorrows, of hopes and disappointments.

The SCIENCES, after a thousand indignities, retired from the palace of PATRONAGE, and having long wandered over the world in grief and distress, were led at last to the cottage of INDEPENDENCE, the daughter of FORTITUDE; where they were taught by PRUDENCE and PARSIMONY to support themselves in dignity and quiet.

N° 92. SATURDAY, *February* 2, 1751.

Jam nunc minaci murmure cornuum
Perstringis aures, jam litui strepunt.—HOR.

Lo! now the clarion's voice I hear,
Its threat'ning murmurs pierce mine ear,
And in thy lines with brazen breath
The trumpet sounds the charge of death.—FRANCIS.

IT has been long observed, that the idea of beauty is vague and undefined, different in different minds, and diversified by time or place. It has been a term hitherto

used to signify that which pleases us we know not why, and in our approbation of which we can justify ourselves only by the concurrence of numbers, without much power of enforcing our opinion upon others by any argument but example and authority. It is, indeed, so little subject to the examinations of reason, that Paschal supposes it to end where demonstration begins, and maintains, that without incongruity and absurdity we cannot speak of *geometrical beauty*.

To trace all the sources of that various pleasure which we ascribe to the agency of beauty, or to disentangle all the perceptions involved in its idea, would, perhaps, require a very great part of the life of Aristotle or Plato. It is, however, in many cases apparent, that this quality is merely relative and comparative; that we pronounce things beautiful because they have something which we agree, for whatever reason, to call beauty, in a greater degree than we have been accustomed to find it in other things of the same kind; and that we transfer the epithet as our knowledge increases, and appropriate it to higher excellence, when higher excellence comes within our view.

Much of the beauty of writing is of this kind; and therefore Boileau justly remarks, that the books which have stood the test of time, and been admired through all the changes which the mind of man has suffered from the various revolutions of knowledge, and the prevalence of contrary customs, have a better claim to our regard than any modern can boast, because the long continuance of their reputation proves that they are adequate to our faculties, and agreeable to nature.

It is, however, the task of criticism to establish principles; to improve opinion into knowledge; and to distinguish those means of pleasing which depend upon known causes and rational deduction, from the nameless and inexplicable elegancies which appeal wholly to the fancy, from which we feel delight, but know not how they produce it, and which may well be termed the enchantresses of the soul. Criticism reduces those regions of literature

under the dominion of science, which have hitherto known only the anarchy of ignorance, the caprices of fancy, and the tyranny of prescription.

There is nothing in the art of versifying so much exposed to the power of imagination as the accommodation of the sound to the sense, or the representation of particular images, by the flow of the verse in which they are expressed. Every student has innumerable passages, in which he, and perhaps he alone, discovers such resemblances; and since the attention of the present race of poetical readers seems particularly turned upon this species of elegance, I shall endeavour to examine how much these conformities have been observed by the poets, or directed by the criticks, how far they can be established upon nature and reason, and on what occasions they have been practised by Milton.

Homer, the father of all poetical beauty, has been particularly celebrated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, as "he that, of all the poets, exhibited the greatest variety of sound; for there are," says he, "innumerable passages, in which length of time, bulk of body, extremity of passion, and stillness of repose; or, in which, on the contrary, brevity, speed, and eagerness, are evidently marked out by the sound of the syllables. Thus the anguish and slow pace with which the blind *Polypheme* groped out with his hands the entrance of his cave, are perceived in the cadence of the verses which describe it."

Κύκλωψ δὲ στενάχων τε καὶ ὠδίνων ὀδύνῃσι,
Χερσὶ ψηλοφόων ————

Meantime the Cyclop raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round.—Pope.

The critick then proceeds to shew, that the efforts of Achilles struggling in his armour against the current of a river, sometimes resisting and sometimes yielding, may be perceived in the elisions of the syllables, the slow succession of the feet, and the strength of the consonants.

Δεῖνον δ' ἀμφ' Αχιλῆα κυκώμενον ἵστατο κῦμα
Ὤθει δ' ἐν σάκεϊ πίπτων ῥόος· οὐδὲ πόδεσσιν
Ἔσκε στηρίξασθαι.——

So oft the surge, in wat'ry mountains spread,
Beats on his back, or bursts upon his head,
Yet, dauntless still, the adverse flood he braves,
And still indignant bounds above the waves.
Tir'd by the tides, his knees relax with toil:
Wash'd from beneath him, slides the slimy soil.—POPE.

When Homer describes the crush of men dashed against a rock, he collects the most unpleasing and harsh sounds.

Σὺν δὲ δύω μάρψας, ὥστε σκύλακας ποτὶ γαίῃ
Κόπτ'· ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν.

——— His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor:
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.—POPE.

And when he would place before the eyes something dreadful and astonishing, he makes choice of the strongest vowels, and the letters of most difficult utterance.

Τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργὼ βλοσυρῶπις ἐστεφάνωτο
Δεινὸν δερκομένη· περὶ δὲ Δεῖμος τε Φόβος τε.

Tremendous Gorgon frown'd upon its field,
And circling terrours fill'd th' expressive shield.—POPE.

Many other examples Dionysius produces; but these will sufficiently shew, that either he was fanciful, or we have lost the genuine pronunciation; for I know not whether, in any one of these instances, such similitude can be discovered. It seems, indeed, probable, that the veneration with which Homer was read, produced many supposititious beauties: for though it is certain, that the sound of many of his verses very justly corresponds with the things expressed, yet, when the force of his imagination, which gave him full possession of every object, is considered, together with the flexibility of his language, of which the syllables might be often contracted or dilated at pleasure, it will seem unlikely that such conformity should happen less frequently even without design.

It is not however to be doubted, that Virgil, who wrote amidst the light of criticism, and who owed so much of his success to art and labour, endeavoured, among other excellencies, to exhibit this similitude; nor has he been less happy in this than in the other graces of versification.

This felicity of his numbers was, at the revival of learning, displayed with great elegance by Vida, in his Art of Poetry.

Haud satis est illis utcunque claudere versum.——
Omnia sed numeris vocum concordibus aptant,
Atque sono quæcunque canunt imitantur, et apta
Verborum facie, et quæsito carminis ore.
Nam diversa opus est veluti dare versibus ora,———
Hic melior motuque pedum, et pernicibus alis,
Molle viam tacito lapsu per levia radit:
Ille autem membris, ac mole, ignavius, ingens
Incedit, tardo molimine subsidendo.
Ecce aliquis subit egregio pulcherrimus ore,
Cui lætum membris Venus omnibus afflat honorem.
Contra alius rudis, informes ostendit et artus,
Hirsutumque supercilium, ac caudam sinuosam,
Ingratus visu, sonitu illætabilis ipso.———
Ergo ubi jam nautæ, spumas salis ære ruentes,
Incubuere mari, videas spumare, reductis
Convulsum remis, rostrisque stridentibus, æquor.
Tunc longè sale saxa sonant, tunc et freta ventis
Incipiunt agitata tumescere: littore fluctus
Illidunt rauco, atque refracta remurmurat unda
Ad scopulos, cumulo insequitur præruptus aquæ mons.—
Cum vero ex alto speculatus cærula Nereus
Leuiit in morem stagni, placidæque paludis,
Labitur uncta vadis abies, natat uncta carina.———
Verba etiam res exiguas angusta sequuntur,
Ingentesque juvant ingentia: cuncta gigantem
Vasta decent, vultus immanes, pectora lata,
Et magni membrorum artus, magna ossa, lacertique.
Atque adeo, siquid geritur molimine magno,
Adde moram, et pariter tecum quoque verba laborent
Segnia: seu quando vi multa gleba coactis
Æternum frangenda bidentibus, æquore seu cùm
Cornua velatarum obvertimus antennarum.
At mora si fuerit damno, properare jubebo.
Si se forte cava extulerit mala vipera terra,
Tolle moras, cape saxa manu, cape robora, pastor;
Ferte citi flammas, date tela, repellite pestem.
Ipse etiam versus ruat, in præcepsque feratur,
Immenso cùm præcipitans ruit Oceano nox,
Aut cùm, perculsus graviter, procumbit humi bos.
Cùmque etiam requies rebus datur, ipsa quoque ultro
Carmina paulisper cursu cessare videbis,
In medio interrupta: quiérunt cùm freta ponti,
Postquam auræ posuere, quiescere protinus ipsum
Cernere erit, mediisque incœptis sistere versum.
Quid dicam, senior cùm telum imbelle sine ictu
Invalidus jacit, et defectis viribus æger?
Num quoque tum versus segni pariter pede languet?
Sanguis hebet, frigent effœtæ in corpore vires.
Fortem autem juvenem deceat prorumpere in arces,
Evertisse domos, præfractaque quadrupedantum
Pectora pectoribus perrumpere, sternere turres
Ingentes, totoque, ferum, dare fumera campo.—Lib. iii.

'Tis not enough his verses to complete,
In measure, number, or determin'd feet.
To all, proportion'd terms he must dispense,
And make the sound a picture of the sense;
The correspondent words exactly frame,
The look, the features, and the mien the same.
With rapid feet and wings, without delay,
This swiftly flies, and smoothly skims away:
This blooms with youth and beauty in his face,
And Venus breathes on ev'ry limb a grace;
That, of rude form, his uncouth members shews,
Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows;
His monstrous tail, in many a fold and wind,
Voluminous and vast, curls up behind;
At once the image and the lines appear,
Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear.
Lo! when the sailors steer the pond'rous ships,
And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps,
Incumbent on the main that roars around,
Beneath the lab'ring oars the waves resound;
The prows wide echoing thro' the dark profound.
To the loud call each distant rock replies;
Tost by the storm the tow'ring surges rise;
While the hoarse ocean beats the sounding shore,
Dash'd from the strand, the flying waters roar,
Flash at the shock, and gathering in a heap,
The liquid mountains rise, and over-hang the deep.
But when blue Neptune from his car surveys,
And calms at one regard the raging seas,
Stretch'd like a peaceful lake the deep subsides,
And the pitch'd vessel o'er the surface glides.
When things are small, the terms should still be so;
For low words please us when the theme is low.
But when some giant, horrible and grim,
Enormous in his gait, and vast in every limb,
Stalks tow'ring on; the swelling words must rise
In just proportion to the monster's size.
If some large weight his huge arms strive to shove,
The verse too labours; the throng'd words scarce move.
When each stiff clod beneath the pond'rous plough
Crumbles and breaks, th' encumber'd lines must flow.
Nor less, when pilots catch the friendly gales,
Unfurl their shrouds, and hoist the wide-stretch'd sails.
But if the poem suffers from delay,
Let the lines fly precipitate away,
And when the viper issues from the brake,
Be quick; with stones, and brands, and fire, attack
His rising crest, and drive the serpent back.
When night descends, or stunn'd by num'rous strokes,
And groaning, to the earth drops the vast ox;
The line too sinks with correspondent sound
Flat with the steer, and headlong to the ground.
When the wild waves subside, and tempests cease,
And hush the roarings of the sea to peace;
So oft we see the interrupted strain
Stopp'd in the midst—and with the silent main
Pause for a space—at last it glides again.

When Priam strains his aged arms, to throw
His unavailing jav'lin at the foe;
(His blood congeal'd, and ev'ry nerve unstrung)
Then with the theme complies the artful song;
Like him, the solitary numbers flow,
Weak, trembling, melancholy, stiff, and slow.
Not so young Pyrrhus, who with rapid force
Beats down embattled armies in his course.
The raging youth on trembling Ilion falls,
Burns her strong gates, and shakes her lofty walls;
Provokes his flying courser to the speed,
In full career to charge the warlike steed:
He piles the field with mountains of the slain;
He pours, he storms, he thunders thro' the plain.—PITT.

From the Italian gardens Pope seems to have transplanted this flower, the growth of happier climates, into a soil less adapted to its nature, and less favourable to its increase.

Soft is the strain, when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud billows lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow;
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.

From these lines, laboured with great attention, and celebrated by a rival wit, may be judged what can be expected from the most diligent endeavours after this imagery of sound. The verse intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must be confessed not much to excel in softness or volubility: and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent, is, indeed, distinctly imaged, for it requires very little skill to make our language rough: but in these lines, which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness, obstruction, or delay. The swiftness of Camilla is rather contrasted than exemplified; why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they, therefore, naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the

Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending*, one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.

These rules and these examples have taught our present criticks to inquire very studiously and minutely into sounds and cadences. It is, therefore, useful to examine with what skill they have proceeded; what discoveries they have made; and whether any rules can be established which may guide us hereafter in such researches.

N° 93. TUESDAY, *February* 5, 1751.

—— *Experiar quid concedatur in illos,*
Quorum flaminiâ tegitur cinis atque Latinâ,—JUV.

More safely truth to urge her claim presumes,
On names now found alone on books and tombs.

THERE are few books on which more time is spent by young students, than on treatises which deliver the characters of authors; nor any which oftener deceive the expectation of the reader, or fill his mind with more opinions which the progress of his studies and the increase of his knowledge oblige him to resign.

Baillet has introduced his collection of the decisions of the learned, by an enumeration of the prejudices which mislead the critick, and raise the passions in rebellion against the judgment. His catalogue, though large, is imperfect; and who can hope to complete it? The beauties of writing have been observed to be often such as cannot in the present state of human knowledge be evinced by evidence, or drawn out into demonstrations; they are therefore wholly subject to the imagination, and do not force their effects upon a mind pre-occupied by unfavourable sentiments, nor overcome the counteraction of a false principle or of stubborn partiality.

To convince any man against his will is hard, but to please him against his will is justly pronounced by Dryden

to be above the reach of human abilities. Interest and passion will hold out long against the closest siege of diagrams and syllogisms, but they are absolutely impregnable to imagery and sentiment; and will for ever bid defiance to the most powerful strains of Virgil or Homer, though they may give way in time to the batteries of Euclid or Archimedes.

In trusting therefore to the sentence of a critick, we are in danger not only from that vanity which exalts writers too often to the dignity of teaching what they are yet to learn, from that negligence which sometimes steals upon the most vigilant caution, and that fallibility to which the condition of nature has subjected every human understanding; but from a thousand extrinsick and accidental causes, from every thing which can excite kindness or malevolence, veneration or contempt.

Many of those who have determined with great boldness upon the various degrees of literary merit, may be justly suspected of having passed sentence, as Seneca remarks of Claudius,

Unâ tantum parte auditâ,
Sæpe et nullâ,

without much knowledge of the cause before them: for it will not easily be imagined of Langbaine, Borrichius, or Rapin, that they had very accurately perused all the books which they praise or censure: or that, even if nature and learning had qualified them for judges, they could read for ever with the attention necessary to just criticism. Such performances, however, are not wholly without their use; for they are commonly just echoes to the voice of fame, and transmit the general suffrage of mankind when they have no particular motives to suppress it.

Criticks, like the rest of mankind, are very frequently misled by interest. The bigotry with which editors regard the authors whom they illustrate or correct, has been generally remarked. Dryden was known to have written most of his critical dissertations only to recommend the work upon which he then happened to be employed; and

Addison is suspected to have denied the expediency of poetical justice, because his own Cato was condemned to perish in a good cause.

There are prejudices which authors, not otherwise weak or corrupt, have indulged without scruple; and perhaps some of them are so complicated with our natural affections, that they cannot easily be disentangled from the heart. Scarce any can hear with impartiality a comparison between the writers of his own and another country; and though it cannot, I think, be charged equally on all nations, that they are blinded with this literary patriotism, yet there are none that do not look upon their authors with the fondness of affinity, and esteem them as well for the place of their birth, as for their knowledge or their wit. There is, therefore, seldom much respect due to comparative criticism, when the competitors are of different countries, unless the judge is of a nation equally indifferent to both. The Italians could not for a long time believe, that there was any learning beyond the mountains; and the French seem generally persuaded, that there are no wits or reasoners equal to their own. I can scarcely conceive that if Scaliger had not considered himself as allied to Virgil, by being born in the same country, he would have found his works so much superiour to those of Homer, or have thought the controversy worthy of so much zeal, vehemence, and acrimony.

There is, indeed, one prejudice, and only one, by which it may be doubted whether it is any dishonour to be sometimes misguided. Criticism has so often given occasion to the envious and ill-natured of gratifying their malignity, that some have thought it necessary to recommend the virtue of candour without restriction, and to preclude all future liberty of censure. Writers possessed with this opinion are continually enforcing civility and decency, recommending to criticks the proper diffidence of themselves, and inculcating the veneration due to celebrated names.

I am not of opinion that these professed enemies of ar-

rogance and severity have much more benevolence or modesty than the rest of mankind; or that they feel in their own hearts, any other intention than to distinguish themselves by their softness and delicacy. Some are modest because they are timorous, and some are lavish of praise because they hope to be repaid.

There is indeed some tenderness due to living writers, when they attack none of those truths which are of importance to the happiness of mankind, and have committed no other offence than that of betraying their own ignorance or dulness. I should think it cruelty to crush an insect who had provoked me only by buzzing in my ear; and would not willingly interrupt the dream of harmless stupidity, or destroy the jest which makes its author laugh. Yet I am far from thinking this tenderness universally necessary; for he that writes may be considered as a kind of general challenger, whom every one has a right to attack; since he quits the common rank of life, steps forward beyond the lists, and offers his merit to the publick judgment. To commence author is to claim praise, and no man can justly aspire to honour, but at the hazard of disgrace.

But whatever be decided concerning contemporaries, whom he that knows the treachery of the human heart, and considers how often we gratify our own pride or envy under the appearance of contending for elegance and propriety, will find himself not much inclined to disturb; there can surely be no exemptions pleaded to secure them from criticism, who can no longer suffer by reproach, and of whom nothing now remains but their writings and their names. Upon these authors the critick is undoubtedly at full liberty to exercise the strictest severity, since he endangers only his own fame, and, like Æneas when he drew his sword in the infernal regions, encounters phantoms which cannot be wounded. He may indeed pay some regard to established reputation; but he can by that shew of reverence consult only his own security, for all other motives are now at an end.

The faults of a writer of acknowledged excellence are more dangerous, because the influence of his example is more extensive; and the interest of learning requires that they should be discovered and stigmatized, before they have the sanction of antiquity conferred upon them, and become precedents of indisputable authority.

It has, indeed, been advanced by Addison, as one of the characteristicks of a true critick, that he points out beauties rather than faults. But it is rather natural to a man of learning and genius to apply himself chiefly to the study of writers who have more beauties than faults to be displayed: for the duty of criticism is neither to depreciate, nor dignify by partial representations, but to hold out the light of reason, whatever it may discover; and to promulgate the determinations of truth, whatever she shall dictate.

N° 94. SATURDAY, *February* 9, 1751.

——Bonus atque fidus
Judex—per obstantes catervas
Explicuit sua victor arma.—HOR.

Perpetual magistrate is he
Who keeps strict justice full in sight;
Who bids the crowd at aweful distance gaze,
And virtue's arms victoriously displays.—FRANCIS.

THE resemblance of poetick numbers to the subject which they mention or describe, may be considered as general or particular; as consisting in the flow and structure of a whole passage taken together, or as comprized in the sound of some emphatical and descriptive words, or in the cadence and harmony of single verses.

The general resemblance of the sound to the sense is to be found in every language which admits of poetry, in every author whose force of fancy enables him to impress images strongly on his own mind, and whose choice and variety of language readily supply him with just representations. To such a writer it is natural to change his

measure with his subject, even without any effort of the understanding, or intervention of the judgment. To revolve jollity and mirth necessarily tunes the voice of a poet to gay and sprightly notes, as it fires his eye with vivacity; and reflection on gloomy situations and disastrous events, will sadden his numbers, as it will cloud his countenance. But in such passages there is only the similitude of pleasure to pleasure, and of grief to grief, without any immediate application to particular images. The same flow of joyous versification will celebrate the jollity of marriage, and the exultation of triumph; and the same langour of melody will suit the complaints of an absent lover, as of a conquered king.

It is scarcely to be doubted, that on many occasions we make the musick which we imagine ourselves to hear, that we modulate the poem by our own disposition, and ascribe to the numbers the effects of the sense. We may observe in life, that it is not easy to deliver a pleasing message in an unpleasing manner, and that we readily associate beauty and deformity with those whom for any reason we love or hate. Yet it would be too daring to declare that all the celebrated adaptations of harmony are chimerical; that Homer had no extraordinry attention to the melody of his verse when he described a nuptial festivity;

> Νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, δαΐδων ὑπολαμπομενάων,
> Ἡγίνεον ἀνὰ ἄστυ, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει.
>
> Here sacred pomp, and genial feast delight,
> And solemn dance, and hymeneal rite;
> Along the street the new-made brides are led,
> With torches flaming, to the nuptial bed;
> The youthful dancers in a circle bound
> To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound.—Pope.

that Vida was merely fanciful, when he supposed Virgil endeavouring to represent by uncommon sweetness of numbers the adventitious beauty of Æneas;

> *Os, humerosque Deo similis: namque ipsa decoram*
> *Cæsariem nato genetrix, lumenque juventæ*
> *Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflárat honores.*

The Trojan chief appeared in open sight,
August in visage, and serenely bright.
His mother goddess, with her hands divine,
Had form'd his curling locks, and made his temples shine;
And giv'n his rolling eyes a sparkling grace,
And breath'd a youthful vigour on his face.—DRYDEN.

or that Milton did not intend to exemplify the harmony which he mentions:

Fountains! and ye that warble as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs! warbling tune his praise.

That Milton understood the force of sounds well adjusted, and knew the compass and variety of the ancient measures, cannot be doubted; since he was both a musician and a critick; but he seems to have considered these conformities of cadence, as either not often attainable in our language, or as petty excellencies unworthy of his ambition: for it will not be found that he has always assigned the same cast of numbers to the same objects. He has given in two passages very minute descriptions of angelick beauty; but though the images are nearly the same, the numbers will be found upon comparison very different:

And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smil'd celestial, and to ev'ry limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd;
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold.

Some of the lines of this description are remarkably defective in harmony, and therefore by no means correspondent with that symmetrical elegance and easy grace which they are intended to exhibit. The failure, however, is fully compensated by the representation of Raphael, which equally delights the ear and imagination:

A seraph wing'd: six wings he wore to shade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament: the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs, with downy gold,
And colours dipp'd in heav'n; the third his feet

Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctur'd grain! like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide.———

The adumbration of particular and distinct images by an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound, is sometimes studied, and sometimes casual. Every language has many words formed in imitation of the noises which they signify. Such are *stridor*, *balo*, and *beatus*, in Latin; and in English to *growl*, to *buzz*, to *hiss*, and to *jarr*. Words of this kind give to a verse the proper similitude of sound, without much labour of the writer, and such happiness is therefore to be attributed rather to fortune than skill; yet they are sometimes combined with great propriety, and undeniably contribute to enforce the impression of the idea. We hear the passing arrow in this line of Virgil;

Et fugit *horrendum stridens* elapsa sigitta;

Th' impetuous arrow whizzes on the wing.—Pope.

and the creaking of hell-gates, in the description by Milton;

——— Open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
Th' infernal doors: and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder.

But many beauties of this kind, which the moderns, and perhaps the ancients, have observed, seem to be the product of blind reverence acting upon fancy. Dionysius himself tells us, that the sound of Homer's verses sometimes exhibits the idea of corporeal bulk: is not this a discovery nearly approaching to that of the blind man, who, after long inquiry into the nature of the scarlet colour, found that it represented nothing so much as the clangour of a trumpet? The representative power of poetick harmony consists of sound and measure; of the force of the syllables singly considered, and of the time in which they are pronounced. Sound can resemble nothing but sound, and time can measure nothing but motion and duration.

The criticks, however, have struck out other similitudes;

nor is there any irregularity of numbers which credulous admiration cannot discover to be eminently beautiful. Thus the propriety of each of these lines has been celebrated by writers whose opinion the world has reason to regard:

Vertitur interea cœlum, et ruit oceano nox.
Meantime the rapid heav'ns rowl'd down the light,
And on the shaded ocean rush'd the night.—DRYDEN.

Sternitur, exanimisque tremens procumbit humi bos.
Down drops the beast, nor needs a second wound;
But sprawls in pangs of death, and spurns the ground.—DRYDEN.

Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.
The mountains labour, and a mouse is born.—ROSCOMMON.

If all these observations are just, there must be some remarkable conformity between the sudden succession of night to day, the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a mouse from a mountain; since we are told of all these images, that they are very strongly impressed by the same form and termination of the verse.

We may, however, without giving way to enthusiasm, admit that some beauties of this kind may be produced. A sudden stop at an unusual syllable may image the cessation of action, or the pause of discourse; and Milton has very happily imitated the repetitions of an echo:

—— I fled, and cried out *death:*
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded *death.*

The measure of time in pronouncing may be varied so as very strongly to represent, not only the modes of external motion, but the quick or slow succession of ideas, and consequently the passions of the mind. This at least was the power of the spondaick and dactylick harmony; but our language can reach no eminent diversities of sound. We can indeed sometimes, by encumbering and retarding the line, shew the difficulty of a progress made by strong efforts, and with frequent interruptions, or mark a slow and heavy motion. Thus Milton has imaged the toil of Satan struggling through chaos;

So he with difficulty and labour hard
Mov'd on: with difficulty and labour he—

Thus he has described the leviathans, or whales;

> Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait.

But he has at other times neglected such representations, as may be observed in the volubility and levity of these lines, which express an action tardy and reluctant:

> ——— Descent and fall
> To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
> When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
> Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deep,
> With what confusion and laborious flight
> We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then.

In another place, he describes the gentle glide of ebbing waters in a line remarkably rough and halting;

> ——— Tripping ebb: that stole
> With soft foot tow'rds the deep who now had stopp'd
> His sluices.

It is not, indeed, to be expected, that the sound should always assist the meaning, but it ought never to counteract it; and therefore Milton has here certainly committed a fault like that of the player, who looked on the earth when he implored the heavens, and to the heavens when he addressed the earth.

Those who are determined to find in Milton an assemblage of all the excellencies which have ennobled all other poets, will perhaps be offended that I do not celebrate his versification in higher terms; for there are readers who discover that in this passage,

> So stretch'd out huge in length the arch-fiend lay,

a *long* form is described in a *long* line; but the truth is, that length of body is only mentioned in a *slow* line, to which it has only the resemblance of time to space, of an hour to a May-pole.

The same turn of ingenuity might perform wonders upon the description of the ark:

> Then from the mountains hewing timber tall,
> Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
> Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and height.

In these lines the poet apparently designs to fix the attention upon bulk; but this is effected by the enume-

ration, not by the measure; for what analogy can there be between modulations of sound, and corporeal dimensions?

Milton indeed seems only to have regarded this species of embellishment so far as not to reject it when it came unsought; which would often happen to a mind so vigorous, employed upon a subject so various and extensive. He had, indeed, a greater and a nobler work to perform; a single sentiment of moral or religious truth, a single image of life or nature, would have been cheaply lost for a thousand echoes of the cadence to the sense; and he who had undertaken to *vindicate the ways of God to man*, might have been accused of neglecting his cause, had he lavished much of his attention upon syllables and sounds.

N° 95. TUESDAY, *February* 12, 1751.

Parcus Deorum cultor, et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro; nunc retrorsum
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos.—HOR.

A fugitive from heav'n and prayer,
I mock'd at all religious fear,
Deep scienc'd in the mazy lore
Of mad philosophy; but now
Hoist sail, and back my voyage plow
To that blest harbour, which I left before.—FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are many diseases both of the body and mind, which it is far easier to prevent than to cure, and therefore I hope you will think me employed in an office not useless either to learning or virtue, if I describe the symptoms of an intellectual malady, which, though at first it seizes only the passions, will, if not speedily remedied, infect the reason, and, from blasting the blossoms of knowledge, proceed in time to canker the root.

I was born in the house of discord. My parents were

of unsuitable ages, contrary tempers, and different religions, and therefore employed the spirit and acuteness which nature had very liberally bestowed upon both, in hourly disputes, and incessant contrivances to detect each other in the wrong; so that from the first exertions of reason I was bred a disputant, trained up in all the arts of domestick sophistry, initiated in a thousand low stratagems, nimble shifts, and sly concealments; versed in all the turns of altercation, and acquainted with the whole discipline of *fending* and *proving*.

It was necessarily my care to preserve the kindness of both the controvertists, and therefore I had very early formed the habit of suspending my judgment, of hearing arguments with indifference, inclining as occasion required to either side, and of holding myself undetermined between them till I knew for what opinion I might conveniently declare.

Thus, Sir, I acquired very early the skill of disputation; and, as we naturally love the arts in which we believe ourselves to excel, I did not let my abilities lie useless, nor suffer my dexterity to be lost for want of practice. I engaged in perpetual wrangles with my school-fellows, and was never to be convinced or repressed by any other arguments than blows, by which my antagonists commonly determined the controversy, as I was, like the Roman orator, much more eminent for eloquence than courage.

At the university I found my predominant ambition completely gratified by the study of logick. I impressed upon my memory a thousand axioms, and ten thousand distinctions, practised every form of syllogism, passed all my days in the schools of disputation, and slept every night with Smiglecius* on my pillow.

You will not doubt but such a genius was soon raised to eminence by such application. I was celebrated in my third year for the most artful opponent that the university could boast, and became the terrour and envy of all the candidates for philosophical reputation.

* A Polish writer, author of a system of "Logick."

My renown, indeed, was not purchased but at the price of all my time and all my studies. I never spoke but to contradict, nor declaimed but in defence of a position universally acknowledged to be false, and therefore worthy, in my opinion, to be adorned with all the colours of false representation, and strengthened with all the art of fallacious subtilty.

My father, who had no other wish than to see his son richer than himself, easily concluded that I should distinguish myself among the professors of the law; and therefore, when I had taken my first degree, dispatched me to the Temple with a paternal admonition, that I should never suffer myself to feel shame, for nothing but modesty could retard my fortune.

Vitiated, ignorant, and heady as I was, I had not yet lost my reverence for virtue, and therefore could not receive such dictates without horrour; but, however, was pleased with his determination of my course of life, because he placed me in the way that leads soonest from the prescribed walks of discipline and education, to the open fields of liberty and choice.

I was now in the place where every one catches the contagion of vanity, and soon began to distinguish myself by sophisms and paradoxes. I declared war against all received opinions and established rules, and levelled my batteries particularly against those universal principles which had stood unshaken in all the vicissitudes of literature, and are considered as the inviolable temples of truth, or the impregnable bulwarks of science.

I applied myself chiefly to those parts of learning which have filled the world with doubt and perplexity, and could readily produce all the arguments relating to matter and motion, time and space, identity and infinity.

I was equally able and equally willing to maintain the system of Newton or Descartes, and favoured occasionally the hypothesis of Ptolemy, or that of Copernicus. I sometimes exalted vegetables to sense, and sometimes degraded animals to mechanism.

Nor was I less inclined to weaken the credit of history, or perplex the doctrines of polity. I was always of the party which I heard the company condemn.

Among the zealots of liberty I could harangue with great copiousness upon the advantages of absolute monarchy, the secrecy of its counsels, and the expedition of its measures; and often celebrated the blessings produced by the extinction of parties, and preclusion of debates.

Among the assertors of regal authority, I never failed to declaim with republican warmth upon the original charter of universal liberty, the corruption of courts, and the folly of voluntary submission to those whom nature has levelled with ourselves.

I knew the defects of every scheme of government, and the inconveniencies of every law. I sometimes shewed how much the condition of mankind would be improved, by breaking the world into petty sovereignties, and sometimes displayed the felicity and peace which universal monarchy would diffuse over the earth.

To every acknowledged fact I found innumerable objections; for it was my rule, to judge of history only by abstracted probability, and therefore I made no scruple of bidding defiance to testimony. I have more than once questioned the existence of Alexander the Great; and having demonstrated the folly of erecting edifices like the pyramids of Egypt, I frequently hinted my suspicion that the world had been long deceived, and that they were to be found only in the narratives of travellers.

It had been happy for me could I have confined my scepticism to historical controversies, and philosophical disquisitions; but having now violated my reason, and accustomed myself to inquire not after proofs, but objections, I had perplexed truth with falsehood, till my ideas were confused, my judgment embarrassed, and my intellects distorted. The habit of considering every proposition as alike uncertain, left me no test by which any tenet could be tried; every opinion presented both sides with

equal evidence, and my fallacies began to operate upon my own mind in more important inquiries. It was at last the sport of my vanity to weaken the obligations of moral duty, and efface the distinctions of good and evil, till I had deadened the sense of conviction, and abandoned my heart to the fluctuations of uncertainty, without anchor and without compass, without satisfaction of curiosity, or peace of conscience, without principles of reason, or motives of action.

Such is the hazard of repressing the first perceptions of truth, of spreading for diversion the snares of sophistry, and engaging reason against its own determinations.

The disproportions of absurdity grow less and less visible, as we are reconciled by degrees to the deformity of a mistress; and falsehood, by long use, is assimilated to the mind, as poison to the body.

I had soon the mortification of seeing my conversation courted only by the ignorant or wicked, by either boys who were enchanted by novelty, or wretches, who having long disobeyed virtue and reason, were now desirous of my assistance to dethrone them.

Thus alarmed, I shuddered at my own corruption, and that pride by which I had been seduced, contributed to reclaim me. I was weary of continual irresolution, and a perpetual equipoise of the mind; and ashamed of being the favourite of those who were scorned and shunned by the rest of mankind.

I therefore retired from all temptation to dispute, prescribed a new regimen to my understanding, and resolved, instead of rejecting all established opinions which I could not prove, to tolerate though not adopt all which I could not confute. I forebore to heat my imagination with needless controversies, to discuss questions confessedly uncertain, and refrained steadily from gratifying my vanity by the support of falsehood.

By this method I am at length recovered from my argumental delirium, and find myself in the state of one awakened from the confusion and tumult of a feverish dream.

I rejoice in the new possession of evidence and reality, and step on from truth to truth with confidence and quiet.

I am, Sir, &c.

PERTINAX.

N° 96. SATURDAY, *February* 16, 1751.

Quod si Platonis musa personat verum,
Quod quisque discit, immemor recordatur.—BOETHIUS.

Truth in Platonick ornaments bedeck'd,
Inforc'd we love, unheeding recollect.

IT is reported of the Persians, by an ancient writer, that the sum of their education consisted in teaching youth *to ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth.*

The bow and the horse were easily mastered, but it would have been happy if we had been informed by what arts veracity was cultivated, and by what preservatives a Persian mind was secured against the temptations to falsehood.

There are, indeed, in the present corruption of mankind, many incitements to forsake truth: the need of palliating our own faults, and the convenience of imposing on the ignorance or credulity of others, so frequently occur; so many immediate evils are to be avoided, and so many present gratifications obtained, by craft and delusion, that very few of those who are much entangled in life, have spirit and constancy sufficient to support them in the steady practice of open veracity.

In order that all men may be taught to speak truth, it is necessary that all likewise should learn to hear it; for no species of falsehood is more frequent than flattery, to which the coward is betrayed by fear, the dependant by interest, and the friend by tenderness. Those who are neither servile nor timorous, are yet desirous to bestow pleasure; and while unjust demands of praise continue to be made, there will always be some whom hope, fear, or kindness, will dispose to pay them.

The guilt of falsehood is very widely extended, and many whom their conscience can scarcely charge with stooping to a lie, have vitiated the morals of others by their vanity, and patronized the vice which they believe themselves to abhor.

Truth is, indeed, not often welcome for its own sake; it is generally unpleasing, because contrary to our wishes and opposite to our practice; and as our attention naturally follows our interest, we hear unwillingly what we are afraid to know, and soon forget what we have no inclination to impress upon our memories.

For this reason many arts of instruction have been invented, by which the reluctance against truth may be overcome; and as physick is given to children in confections, precepts have been hidden under a thousand appearances, that mankind may be bribed by pleasure to escape destruction.

While the world was yet in its infancy, TRUTH came among mortals from above, and FALSEHOOD from below. TRUTH was the daughter of JUPITER and WISDOM; FALSEHOOD was the progeny of FOLLY impregnated by the wind. They advanced with equal confidence to seize the dominion of the new creation, and, as their enmity and their force were well known to the celestials, all the eyes of heaven were turned upon the contest.

TRUTH seemed conscious of superiour power and juster claim, and therefore came on towering and majestick, unassisted and alone; REASON, indeed, always attended her, but appeared her follower, rather than companion. Her march was slow and stately, but her motion was perpetually progressive, and when once she had grounded her foot, neither gods nor men could force her to retire.

FALSEHOOD always endeavoured to copy the mien and attitudes of TRUTH, and was very successful in the arts of mimickry. She was surrounded, animated, and supported by innumerable legions of appetites and passions, but like other feeble commanders, was obliged often to receive law from her allies. Her motions were sudden, irregular, and

violent; for she had no steadiness nor constancy. She often gained conquests by hasty incursions, which she never hoped to keep by her own strength, but maintained by the help of the passions, whom she generally found resolute and faithful.

It sometimes happened that the antagonists met in full opposition. In these encounters FALSEHOOD always invested her head with clouds, and commanded FRAUD to place ambushes about her. In her left hand she bore the shield of IMPUDENCE, and the quiver of SOPHISTRY rattled on her shoulder. All the Passions attended at her call; VANITY clapped her wings before, and OBSTINACY supported her behind. Thus guarded and assisted, she sometimes advanced against TRUTH, and sometimes waited the attack; but always endeavoured to skirmish at a distance, perpetually shifted her ground, and let fly her arrows in different directions; for she certainly found that her strength failed, whenever the eye of TRUTH darted full upon her.

TRUTH had the aweful aspect, though not the thunder of her father; and when the long continuance of the contest brought them near to one another, FALSEHOOD let the arms of SOPHISTRY fall from her grasp, and holding up the shield of IMPUDENCE with both her hands, sheltered herself amongst the Passions.

TRUTH, though she was often wounded, always recovered in a short time; but it was common for the slightest hurt, received by FALSEHOOD, to spread its malignity to the neighbouring parts, and to burst open again when it seemed to have been cured.

FALSEHOOD, in a short time, found by experience that her superiority consisted only in the celerity of her course, and the changes of her posture. She therefore ordered SUSPICION to beat the ground before her, and avoided with great care to cross the way of TRUTH, who, as she never varied her point, but moved constantly upon the same line, was easily escaped by the oblique and desultory

movements, the quick retreats, and active doubles which FALSEHOOD always practised, when the enemy began to raise terrour by her approach.

By this procedure FALSEHOOD every hour encroached upon the world, and extended her empire through all climes and regions. Wherever she carried her victories she left the PASSIONS in full authority behind her; who were so well pleased with command, that they held out with great obstinacy when TRUTH came to seize their posts, and never failed to retard her progress, though they could not always stop it. They yielded at last with great reluctance, frequent rallies, and sullen submission; and always inclined to revolt when TRUTH ceased to awe them by her immediate presence.

TRUTH, who, when she first descended from the heavenly palaces, expected to have been received by universal acclamation, cherished with kindness, heard with obedience, and invited to spread her influence from province to province, now found, that wherever she came, she must force her passage. Every intellect was precluded by PREJUDICE, and every heart preoccupied by PASSION. She indeed advanced, but she advanced slowly; and often lost the conquests which she left behind her, by sudden insurrections of the appetites, that shook off their allegiance, and ranged themselves again under the banner of her enemy.

TRUTH, however, did not grow weaker by the struggle, for her vigour was unconquerable; yet she was provoked to see herself thus baffled and impeded by an enemy, whom she looked on with contempt, and who had no advantage but such as she owed to inconstancy, weakness, and artifice. She therefore, in the anger of disappointment, called upon her father JUPITER to re-establish her in the skies, and leave mankind to the disorder and misery which they deserved, by submitting willingly to the usurpation of FALSEHOOD.

JUPITER compassionated the world too much to grant

her request, yet was willing to ease her labours and mitigate her vexation. He commanded her to consult the Muses by what methods she might obtain an easier reception, and reign without the toil of incessant war. It was then discovered, that she obstructed her own progress by the severity of her aspect, and the solemnity of her dictates; and that men would never willingly admit her, till they ceased to fear her, since by giving themselves up to FALSEHOOD, they seldom made any sacrifice of their ease or pleasure, because she took the shape that was most engaging, and always suffered herself to be dressed and painted by DESIRE. The Muses wove, in the loom of Pallas, a loose and changeable robe, like that in which FALSEHOOD captivated her admirers; with this they invested TRUTH, and named her FICTION. She now went out again to conquer with more success; for when she demanded entrance of the PASSIONS, they often mistook her for FALSEHOOD, and delivered up their charge: but when she had once taken possession, she was soon disrobed by REASON, and shone out, in her original form, with native effulgence and resistless dignity.

N° 97. TUESDAY, *February* 19, 1751.

Fœcunda culpæ secula, nuptias
Primum inquinavere, et genus, et domos.
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit.—HOR.

Fruitful of crimes, this age first stain'd
Their hapless offspring, and profan'd
The nuptial bed; from whence the woes,
Which, various and unnumber'd, rose
From this polluted fountain head,
O'er Rome and o'er the nations spread.—FRANCIS.

THE reader is indebted for this day's entertainment to an author* from whom the age has received greater

* Richardson the Novelist.

favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

When the Spectator was first published in single papers, it gave me so much pleasure, that it is one of the favourite amusements of my age to recollect it; and when I reflect on the foibles of those times, as described in that useful work, and compare them with the vices now reigning among us, I cannot but wish that you would oftener take cognizance of the manners of the better half of the human species, that if your precepts and observations be carried down to posterity, the Spectators may shew to the rising generation what were the fashionable follies of their grandmothers, the Rambler of their mothers, and that from both they may draw instruction and warning.

When I read those Spectators which took notice of the misbehaviour of young women at church, by which they vainly hope to attract admirers, I used to pronounce such forward young women Seekers, in order to distinguish them by a mark of infamy from those who had patience and decency to stay till they were sought.

But I have lived to see such a change in the manners of women, that I would now be willing to compound with them for that name, although I then thought it disgraceful enough, if they would deserve no worse; since now they are too generally given up to negligence of domestick business, to idle amusements, and to wicked rackets, without any settled view at all but of squandering time.

In the time of the Spectator, excepting sometimes in appearance in the ring, sometimes at a good and chosen play, sometimes on a visit at the house of a grave relation, the young ladies contented themselves to be found employed in domestick duties; for then routes, drums, balls, assemblies, and such like markets for women, were not known.

Modesty and diffidence, gentleness and meekness, were looked upon as the appropriate virtues and characteristick graces of the sex; and if a forward spirit pushed itself into notice, it was exposed in print as it deserved.

The churches were almost the only places where single women were to be seen by strangers. Men went thither expecting to see them, and perhaps too much for that only purpose.

But some good often resulted, however improper might be their motives. Both sexes were in the way of their duty. The man must be abandoned indeed, who loves not goodness in another; nor were the young fellows of that age so wholly lost to a sense of right, as pride and conceit has since made them affect to be. When therefore they saw a fair-one whose decent behaviour and cheerful piety shewed her earnest in her first duties, they had the less doubt, judging politically only, that she would have a conscientious regard to her second.

With what ardour have I seen watched for, the rising of a kneeling beauty; and what additional charms has devotion given to her recommunicated features?

The men were often the better for what they heard. Even a Saul was once found prophesying among the prophets whom he had set out to destroy. To a man thus put into good humour by a pleasing object, religion itself looked more amiable. The MEN SEEKERS of the SPECTATOR's time loved the holy place for the object's sake, and loved the object for her suitable behaviour in it.

Reverence mingled with their love, and they thought that a young lady of such good principles must be addressed only by the man who at least made a shew of good principles, whether his heart was yet quite right or not.

Nor did the young lady's behaviour, at any time of the service, lessen this reverence. Her eyes were her own, her ears the preacher's. Women are always most observed when they seem themselves least to observe, or to lay out for observation. The eye of a respectful lover

loves rather to receive confidence from the withdrawn eye of the fair-one, than to find itself obliged to retreat.

When a young gentleman's affection was thus laudably engaged, he pursued its natural dictates; keeping then was a rare, at least a secret and scandalous vice, and a wife was the summit of his wishes. Rejection was now dreaded, and pre-engagement apprehended. A woman whom he loved, he was ready to think must be admired by all the world. His fears, his uncertainties, increased his love.

Every inquiry he made into the lady's domestick excellence, which, when a wife is to be chosen, will surely not be neglected, confirmed him in his choice. He opens his heart to a common friend, and honestly discovers the state of his fortune. His friend applies to those of the young lady, whose parents, if they approve his proposals, disclose them to their daughter.

She perhaps is not an absolute stranger to the passion of the young gentleman. His eyes, his assiduities, his constant attendance at a church, whither, till of late, he used seldom to come, and a thousand little observances that he paid her, had very probably first forced her to regard, and then inclined her to favour him.

That a young lady should be in love, and the love of the young gentleman undeclared, is an heterodoxy which prudence, and even policy, must not allow. But, thus applied to, she is all resignation to her parents. Charming resignation, which inclination opposes not.

Her relations applaud her for her duty; friends meet; points are adjusted; delightful perturbations, and hopes, and a few lover's fears, fill up the tedious space till an interview is granted; for the young lady had not made herself cheap at publick places.

The time of interview arrives. She is modestly reserved; he is not confident. He declares his passion; the consciousness of her own worth, and his application to her parents, take from her any doubt of his sincerity; and she owns herself obliged to him for his good opinion. The

inquiries of her friends into his character, have taught her that his good opinion deserves to be valued.

She tacitly allows of his future visits; he renews them; the regard of each for the other is confirmed; and when he presses for the favour of her hand, he receives a declaration of an entire acquiescence with her duty, and a modest acknowledgment of esteem for him.

He applies to her parents therefore for a near day; and thinks himself under obligation to them for the cheerful and affectionate manner with which they receive his agreeable application.

With this prospect of future happiness, the marriage is celebrated. Gratulations pour in from every quarter. Parents and relations on both sides, brought acquainted in the course of the courtship, can receive the happy couple with countenances illumined, and joyful hearts.

The brothers, the sisters, the friends of one family, are the brothers, the sisters, the friends of the other. Their two families, thus made one, are the world to the young couple.

Their home is the place of their principal delight, nor do they ever occasionally quit it but they find the pleasure of returning to it augmented in proportion to the time of their absence from it.

Oh, Mr. Rambler! forgive the talkativeness of an old man! When I courted and married my Lætitia, then a blooming beauty, every thing passed just so! But how is the case now? The ladies, maidens, wives, and widows, are engrossed by places of open resort and general entertainment, which fill every quarter of the metropolis, and being constantly frequented, make home irksome. Breakfasting-places, dining-places, routes, drums, concerts, balls, plays, operas, masquerades for the evening, and even for all night, and lately, publick sales of the goods of broken housekeepers, which the general dissoluteness of manners has contributed to make very frequent, come in as another seasonable relief to these modern time-killers.

In the summer there are in every country-town assem-

blies; Tunbridge, Bath, Cheltenham, Scarborough! What expence of dress and equipage is required to qualify the frequenters for such emulous appearance!

By the natural infection of example, the lowest people have places of six-penny resort, and gaming-tables for pence. Thus servants are now induced to fraud and dishonesty, to support extravagance, and supply their losses.

As to the ladies who frequent those publick places, they are not ashamed to shew their faces wherever men dare go, nor blush to try who shall stare most impudently, or who shall laugh loudest on the publick walks.

The men who would make good husbands, if they visit those places are frighted at wedlock, and resolve to live single, except they are bought at a very high price. They can be spectators of all that passes, and, if they please, more than spectators, at the expence of others. The companion of an evening, and the companion for life, require very different qualifications.

Two thousand pounds in the last age, with a domestick wife, would go farther than than ten thousand in this. Yet settlements are expected, that often, to a mercantile man especially, sink a fortune into uselessness; and pin-money is stipulated for, which makes a wife independent, and destroys love, by putting it out of a man's power to lay any obligation upon her, that might engage gratitude, and kindle affection. When to all this the card-tables are added, how can a prudent man think of marrying?

And when the worthy men know not where to find wives, must not the sex be left to the foplings, the coxcombs, the libertines of the age, whom they help to make such? And need even these wretches marry to enjoy the conversation of those who render their company so cheap?

And what, after all, is the benefit which the gay coquette obtains by her flutters? As she is approachable by every man without requiring, I will not say incense or adoration, but even common complaisance, every fop treats her as upon the level, looks upon her light airs as invitations, and is on the watch to take the advantage: she has

companions indeed, but no lovers; for love is respectful, and timorous; and where among all her followers will she find a husband?

Set, dear Sir, before the youthful, the gay, the inconsiderate, the contempt as well as the danger to which they are exposed. At one time or other, women, not utterly thoughtless, will be convinced of the justice of your censure, and the charity of your instruction.

But should your expostulations and reproofs have no effect upon those who are far gone in fashionable folly, they may be retailed from their mouths to their nieces (marriage will not often have entitled these to daughters), when they, the meteors of a day, find themselves elbowed off the stage of vanity by other flutterers; for the most admired women cannot have many Tunbridge, many Bath seasons to blaze in; since even fine faces, often seen, are less regarded than new faces, the proper punishment of showy girls for rendering themselves so impolitickly cheap.

I am, Sir,

Your sincere admirer, &c.

N° 98. SATURDAY, *February* 23, 1751.

Quæ nec Sarmentus iniquas
Cæsaris ad mensas, nec vilis Gabba tulisset.—JUV.

Which not Sarmentus brook'd at Cæsar's board,
Nor grov'ling Gabba from his haughty lord.—ELPHINSTON.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

YOU have often endeavoured to impress upon your readers an observation of more truth than novelty, that life passes, for the most part, in petty transactions; that our hours glide away in trifling amusements and slight gratifications; and that there very seldom emerges any occasion that can call forth great virtue or great abilities.

It very commonly happens that speculation has no in-

fluence on conduct. Just conclusions, and cogent arguments, formed by laborious study, and diligent inquiry, are often reposited in the treasuries of memory, as gold in a miser's chest, useless alike to others and himself. As some are not richer for the extent of their possessions, others are not wiser for the multitude of their ideas.

You have truly described the state of human beings, but it may be doubted whether you have accommodated your precepts to your description; whether you have not generally considered your readers as influenced by the tragick passions, and susceptible of pain or pleasure only from powerful agents, and from great events.

To an authour who writes not for the improvement of a single art, or the establishment of a controverted doctrine, but equally intends the advantage and equally courts the perusal of all the classes of mankind, nothing can justly seem unworthy of regard, by which the pleasure of conversation may be increased, and the daily satisfactions of familiar life secured from interruption and disgust.

For this reason you would not have injured your reputation, if you had sometimes descended to the minuter duties of social beings, and enforced the observance of those little civilities and ceremonious delicacies, which, inconsiderable as they may appear to the man of science, and difficult as they may prove to be detailed with dignity, yet contribute to the regulation of the world, by facilitating the intercourse between one man and another, and of which the French have sufficiently testified their esteem, by terming the knowledge and practice of them *Sçavoir vivre*, The art of living.

Politeness is one of those advantages which we never estimate rightly but by the inconvenience of its loss. Its influence upon the manners is constant and uniform, so that, like an equal motion, it escapes perception. The circumstances of every action are so adjusted to each other, that we do not see where any errour could have been committed, and rather acquiesce in its propriety than admire its exactness.

But as sickness shews us the value of ease, a little familiarity with those who were never taught to endeavour the gratification of others, but regulate their behaviour merely by their own will, will soon evince the necessity of established modes and formalities to the happiness and quiet of common life.

Wisdom and virtue are by no means sufficient, without the supplemental laws of good-breeding, to secure freedom from degenerating to rudeness, or self-esteem from swelling into insolence; a thousand incivilities may be committed, and a thousand offices neglected, without any remorse of conscience, or reproach from reason.

The true effect of genuine politeness seems to be rather ease than pleasure. The power of delighting must be conferred by nature, and cannot be delivered by precept, or obtained by imitation; but though it be the privilege of a very small number to ravish and to charm, every man may hope by rules and caution not to give pain, and may, therefore, by the help of good-breeding, enjoy the kindness of mankind, though he should have no claim to higher distinctions.

The universal axiom in which all complaisance is included, and from which flow all the formalities which custom has established in civilized nations, is, *That no man shall give any preference to himself.* A rule so comprehensive and certain, that, perhaps, it is not easy for the mind to image an incivility, without supposing it to be broken.

There are, indeed, in every place some particular modes of the ceremonial part of good-breeding, which, being arbitrary and accidental, can be learned only by habitude and conversation; such are the forms of salutation, the different gradations of reverence, and all the adjustments of place and precedence. These, however, may be often violated without offence, if it be sufficiently evident, that neither malice nor pride contributed to the failure; but will not atone, however rigidly observed, for the tumour of insolence, or petulance of contempt.

I have, indeed, not found among any part of mankind, less real and rational complaisance, than among those who have passed their time in paying and receiving visits, in frequenting public entertainments, in studying the exact measures of ceremony, and in watching all the variations of fashionable courtesy.

They know, indeed, at what hour they may beat the door of an acquaintance, how many steps they must attend him towards the gate, and what interval should pass before his visit is returned; but seldom extend their care beyond the exteriour and unessential parts of civility, nor refuse their own vanity any gratification, however expensive to the quiet of another.

Trypherus is a man remarkable for splendour and expence; a man, that having been originally placed by his fortune and rank in the first class of the community, has acquired that air of dignity, and that readiness in the exchange of compliments, which courts, balls, and levees, easily confer.

But Trypherus, without any settled purposes of malignity, partly by his ignorance of human nature, and partly by the habit of contemplating with great satisfaction his own grandeur and riches, is hourly giving disgust to those whom chance or expectation subject to his vanity.

To a man whose fortune confines him to a small house, he declaims upon the pleasure of spacious apartments, and the convenience of changing his lodging-room in different parts of the year; tells him, that he hates confinement; and concludes, that if his chamber was less, he should never wake without thinking of a prison.

To Eucretas, a man of birth equal to himself, but of much less estate, he shewed his services of plate, and remarked that such things were, indeed, nothing better than costly trifles, but that no man must pretend to the rank of a gentleman without them; and that for his part, if his estate was smaller, he should not think of enjoying but

increasing it, and would inquire out a trade for his eldest son.

He has, in imitation of some more acute observer than himself, collected a great many shifts and artifices by which poverty is concealed; and among the ladies of small fortune, never fails to talk of frippery and slight silks, and the convenience of a general mourning.

I have been insulted a thousand times with a catalogue of his pictures, his jewels, and his rarities, which, though he knows the humble neatness of my habitation, he seldom fails to conclude by a declaration, that wherever he sees a house meanly furnished, he despises the owner's taste, or pities his poverty.

This, Mr. Rambler, is the practice of Trypherus, by which he is become the terrour of all who are less wealthy than himself, and has raised innumerable enemies without rivalry, and without malevolence.

Yet though all are not equally culpable with Trypherus, it is scarcely possible to find any man who does not frequently, like him, indulge his own pride by forcing others into a comparison with himself when he knows the advantage is on his side, without considering that unnecessarily to obtrude unpleasing ideas, is a species of oppression; and that it is little more criminal to deprive another of some real advantage, than to interrupt that forgetfulness of its absence which is the next happiness to actual possession.

I am, &c.

EUTROPIUS.

N° 99. Tuesday, *February* 26, 1751.

Scilicet ingeniis aliqua est concordia junctis,
Et servat studii fœdera quisque sui;
Rusticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,
Rectorem dubiæ navita puppis amat.—Ovid.

Congenial passions souls together bind,
And every calling mingles with its kind;
Soldier unites with soldier, swain with swain,
The mariner with him that roves the main.—F. Lewis.

It has been ordained by Providence, for the conservation of order in the immense variety of nature, and for the regular propagation of the several classes of life with which the elements are peopled, that every creature should be drawn by some secret attraction to those of his own kind; and that not only the gentle and domestick animals which naturally unite into companies, or cohabit by pairs, should continue faithful to their species; but even those ravenous and ferocious savages which Aristotle observes never to be gregarious, should range mountains and deserts in search of one another, rather than pollute the world with a monstrous birth.

As the perpetuity and distinction of the lower tribes of the creation require that they should be determined to proper mates by some uniform motive of choice, or some cogent principle of instinct; it is necessary likewise, that man, whose wider capacity demands more gratifications, and who feels in himself innumerable wants, which a life of solitude cannot supply, and innumerable powers to which it cannot give employment, should be led to suitable companions by particular influence; and among many beings of the same nature with himself, he may select some for intimacy and tenderness, and improve the condition of his existence, by superadding friendship to humanity, and the love of individuals to that of the species.

Other animals are so formed, that they seem to contribute very little to the happiness of each other, and know neither joy, nor grief, nor love, nor hatred, but as they are urged by some desire immediately subservient either to the support of their own lives, or to the continuation of their race; they therefore seldom appear to regard any of the minuter discriminations which distinguish creatures of the same kind from one another.

But if man were to feel no incentives to kindness, more than his general tendency to congenial nature, Babylon or London, with all their multitudes, would have to him the desolation of a wilderness; his affections, not compressed into a narrower compass, would vanish like elemental fire, in boundless evaporation; he would languish in perpetual insensibility, and though he might, perhaps, in the first vigour of youth, amuse himself with the fresh enjoyments of life, yet, when curiosity should cease, and alacrity subside, he would abandon himself to the fluctuations of chance, without expecting help against any calamity, or feeling any wish for the happiness of others.

To love all men is our duty, so far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readiness of occasional kindness; but to love all equally is impossible; at least impossible without the extinction of those passions which now produce all our pains and all our pleasures; without the disuse, if not the abolition, of some of our faculties, and the suppression of all our hopes and fears in apathy and indifference.

The necessities of our condition require a thousand offices of tenderness, which mere regard for the species will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances which only the solicitude of friendship will discover and remedy, and which would remain for ever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity, were it only surveyed by the eye of general benevolence, equally attentive to every misery.

The great community of mankind is, therefore, neces-

sarily broken into smaller independent societies; these form distinct interests, which are too frequently opposed to each other, and which they who have entered into the league of particular governments falsely think it virtue to promote, however destructive to the happiness of the rest of the world.

Such unions are again separated into subordinate classes and combinations, and social life is perpetually branched out into minuter subdivisions, till it terminates in the last ramifications of private friendship.

That friendship may at once be fond and lasting, it has been already observed in these papers, that a conformity of inclinations is necessary. No man can have much kindness for him by whom he does not believe himself esteemed, and nothing so evidently proves esteem as imitation.

That benevolence is always strongest which arises from participation of the same pleasures, since we are naturally most willing to revive in our minds the memory of persons, with whom the idea of enjoyment is connected.

It is commonly, therefore, to little purpose, that any one endeavours to ingratiate himself with such as he cannot accompany in their amusements and diversions. Men have been known to rise to favour and to fortune, only by being skilful in the sports with which their patron happened to be delighted, by concurring with his taste for some particular species of curiosities, by relishing the same wine, or applauding the same cookery.

Even those whom wisdom or virtue have placed above regard to such petty recommendations, must nevertheless be gained by similitude of manners. The highest and noblest enjoyment of familiar life, the communication of knowledge and reciprocation of sentiments, must always presuppose a disposition to the same inquiry, and delight in the same discoveries.

With what satisfaction could the politician lay his

schemes for the reformation of laws, or his comparisons of different forms of government, before the chemist, who has never accustomed his thoughts to any other object than salt and sulphur? or how could the astronomer, in explaining his calculations and conjectures, endure the coldness of a grammarian, who would lose sight of Jupiter and all his satellites, for a happy etymology of an obscure word, or a better explication of a controverted line?

Every man loves merit of the same kind with his own, when it is not likely to hinder his advancement or his reputation; for he not only best understand the worth of those qualities which he labours to cultivate, or the usefulness of the art which he practises with success, but always feels a reflected pleasure from the praises, which, though given to another, belong equally to himself.

There is indeed no need of research and refinement to discover that men must generally select their companions from their own state of life, since there are not many minds furnished for great variety of conversation, or adapted to multiplicity of intellectual entertainments.

The sailor, the academick, the lawyer, the mechanick, and the courtier, have all a cast of talk peculiar to their own fraternity, have fixed their attention upon the same events, have been engaged in affairs of the same sort, and made use of allusions and illustrations which themselves only can understand.

To be infected with the jargon of a particular profession, and to know only the language of a single rank of mortals, is indeed sufficiently despicable. But as limits must be always set to the excursions of the human mind, there will be some study which every man more zealously prosecutes, some darling subject on which he is principally pleased to converse; and he that can most inform or best understand him, will certainly be welcomed with particular regard.

Such partiality is not wholly to be avoided, nor is it culpable, unless suffered so far to predominate as to pro-

duce aversion from every other kind of excellence, and to shade the lustre of dissimilar virtues. Those, therefore, whom the lot of life has conjoined, should endeavour constantly to approach towards the inclination of each other, invigorate every motion of concurrent desire, and fan every spark of kindred curiosity.

It has been justly observed, that discord generally operates in little things; it is inflamed to its utmost vehemence by contrariety of taste, oftener than of principles; and might therefore commonly be avoided by innocent conformity, which, if it was not at first the motive, ought always to be the consequence of indissoluble union.

N° 100. SATURDAY, *March* 2, 1751.

Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit.—PERSIUS.

Horace, with sly insinuating grace,
Laugh'd at his friend, and look'd him in the face;
Would raise a blush where secret vice he found,
And tickle while he gently prob'd the wound.
With seeming innocence the crowd beguil'd;
But made the desperate passes, when he smil'd.—DRYDEN.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As very many well disposed persons, by the unavoidable necessity of their affairs, are so unfortunate as to be totally buried in the country, where they labour under the most deplorable ignorance of what is transacting among the polite part of mankind, I cannot help thinking, that, as a publick writer, you should take the case of these truly compassionable objects under your consideration.

These unhappy languishers in obscurity should be furnished with such accounts of the employments of people

of the world, as may engage them in their several remote corners to a laudable imitation; or, at least, so far inform and prepare them, that if by any joyful change of situation they should be suddenly transported into the gay scene, they may not gape, and wonder, and stare, and be utterly at a loss how to behave and make a proper appearance in it.

It is inconceivable how much the welfare of all the country towns in the kingdom might be promoted, if you would use your charitable endeavours to raise in them a noble emulation of the manners and customs of higher life.

For this purpose you should give a very clear and ample description of the whole set of polite acquirements; a complete history of forms, fashions, frolicks, of routs, drums, hurricanes, balls, assemblies, ridottos, masquerades, auctions, plays, operas, puppet-shows, and bear-gardens; of all those delights which profitably engage the attention of the most sublime characters, and by which they have brought to such amazing perfection the whole art and mystery of passing day after day, week after week, and year after year, without the heavy assistance of any one thing that formal creatures are pleased to call useful and necessary.

In giving due instructions through what steps to attain this summit of human excellence, you may add such irresistible arguments in its favour, as must convince numbers, who in other instances do not seem to want natural understanding, of the unaccountable errour of supposing they were sent into the world for any other purpose but to flutter, sport, and shine. For, after all, nothing can be clearer than that an everlasting round of diversion, and the more lively and hurrying the better, is the most important end of human life.

It is really prodigious, so much as the world is improved, that there should in these days be persons so ignorant and stupid as to think it necessary to mispend their

time, and trouble their heads about any thing else than pursuing the present fancy: for what else is worth living for?

It is time enough surely to think of consequences when they come; and as for the antiquated notions of duty, they are not to be met with in any French novel, or any book one ever looks into, but derived almost wholly from the writings of authours, who lived a vast many ages ago, and who, as they were totally without any idea of those accomplishments which now characterize people of distinction, have been for some time sinking apace into utter contempt. It does not appear that even their most zealous admirers, for some partizans of his own sort every writer will have, can pretend to say they were ever at one ridotto.

In the important article of diversions, the ceremonial of visits, the ecstatick delight of unfriendly intimacies and unmeaning civilities, they are absolutely silent. Blunt truth, and downright honesty, plain clothes, staying at home, hard work, few words, and those unenlivened with censure or double meaning, are what they recommend as the ornaments and pleasures of life. Little oaths, polite dissimulation, tea-table scandal, delightful indolence, the glitter of finery, the triumph of precedence, the enchantments of flattery, they seem to have had no notion of; and I cannot but laugh to think what a figure they would have made in a drawing-room, and how frighted they would have looked at a gaming-table.

The noble zeal of patriotism that disdains authority, and tramples on laws for sport, was absolutely the aversion of these tame wretches.

Indeed one cannot discover any one thing they pretend to teach people, but to be wise, and good; acquirements infinitely below the consideration of persons of taste and spirit, who know how to spend their time to so much better purpose.

Among other admirable improvements, pray, Mr. Ram-

bler, do not forget to enlarge on the very extensive benefit of playing at cards on Sundays, a practice of such infinite use, that we may modestly expect to see it prevail universally in all parts of this kingdom.

To persons of fashion, the advantage is obvious; because, as for some strange reason or other, which no fine gentleman or fine lady has yet been able to penetrate, there is neither play, nor masquerade, nor bottled conjurer, nor any other thing worth living for, to be had on a Sunday; if it were not for the charitable assistance of whist or bragg, the genteel part of mankind must, one day in seven, necessarily suffer a total extinction of being.

Nor are the persons of high rank the only gainers by so salutary a custom, which extends its good influence, in some degree, to the lower orders of the people; but were it quite general, how much better and happier would the world be than it is even now?

'Tis hard upon poor creatures, be they ever so mean, to deny them those enjoyments and liberties which are equally open for all. Yet if servants were taught to go to church on this day, spend some part of it in reading or receiving instruction in a family way, and the rest in mere friendly conversation, the poor wretches would infallibly take it into their heads, that they were obliged to be sober, modest, diligent, and faithful to their masters and mistresses.

Now surely no one of common prudence or humanity would wish their domesticks infected with such strange and primitive notions, or laid under such unmerciful restraints: all which may, in a great measure, be prevented by the prevalence of the good-humoured fashion, that I would have you recommend. For when the lower kind of people see their betters, with a truly laudable spirit, insulting and flying in the face of those rude, ill-bred dictators, piety and the laws, they are thereby excited and admonished, as far as actions can admonish and excite, and taught that they too have an equal right of setting

them at defiance in such instances as their particular necessities and inclinations may require; and thus is the liberty of the whole human species mightily improved and enlarged.

In short, Mr. Rambler, by a faithful representation of the numberless benefits of a modish life, you will have done your part in promoting what every body seems to confess the true purpose of human existence, perpetual dissipation.

By encouraging people to employ their whole attention on trifles, and make amusement their sole study, you will teach them how to avoid many very uneasy reflections.

All the soft feelings of humanity, the sympathies of friendship, all natural temptations to the care of a family, and solicitude about the good or ill of others, with the whole train of domestick and social affections, which create such daily anxieties and embarrassments, will be happily stifled and suppressed in a round of perpetual delights; and all serious thoughts, but particularly that of *hereafter*, be banished out of the world; a most perplexing apprehension, but luckily a most groundless one too, as it is so very clear a case, that nobody ever dies.

I am, &c.

CHARIESSA.*

* Mrs. Carter, of Deal.

N° 101. TUESDAY, *March* 5, 1751.

Mella jubes Hyblæa tibi vel Hymettia nasci,
Et thyma Cecropiæ Corsica ponis api.—MART.

Alas! dear Sir, you try in vain,
Impossibilities to gain;
No bee from Corsica's rank juice,
Hyblæan honey can produce.—F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING by several years of continual study treasured in my mind a great number of principles and ideas, and obtained by frequent exercise the power of applying them with propriety, and combining them with readiness, I resolved to quit the university, where I considered myself as a gem hidden in the mine, and to mingle in the crowd of public life. I was naturally attracted by the company of those who were of the same age with myself, and finding that my academical gravity contributed very little to my reputation, applied my faculties to jocularity and burlesque. Thus, in a short time, I had heated my imagination to such a state of activity and ebullition, that upon every occasion it fumed away in bursts of wit, and evaporations of gaiety. I became on a sudden the idol of the coffee-house, was in one winter solicited to accept the presidentship of five clubs, was dragged by violence to every new play, and quoted in every controversy upon theatrical merit; was in every publick place surrounded by a multitude of humble auditors, who retailed in other places of resort my maxims and my jests, and was boasted as their intimate and companion, by many, who had no other pretensions to my acquaintance, than that they had drank chocolate in the same room.

You will not wonder, Mr. Rambler, that I mention my success with some appearance of triumph and elevation. Perhaps no kind of superiority is more flattering or alluring than that which is conferred by the powers of conver-

sation, by extemporaneous sprightliness of fancy, copiousness of language, and fertility of sentiment. In other exertions of genius, the greater part of the praise is unknown and unenjoyed; the writer, indeed, spreads his reputation to a wider extent, but receives little pleasure or advantage from the diffusion of his name, and only obtains a kind of nominal sovereignty over regions which pay no tribute. The colloquial wit has always his own radiance reflected on himself, and enjoys all the pleasure which he bestows; he finds his power confessed by every one that approaches him, sees friendship kindling with rapture, and attention swelling into praise.

The desire which every man feels of importance and esteem, is so much gratified by finding an assembly, at his entrance, brightened with gladness and hushed with expectation, that the recollection of such distinctions can scarcely fail to be pleasing whensoever it is innocent. And my conscience does not reproach me with any mean or criminal effects of vanity; since I always employed my influence on the side of virtue, and never sacrificed my understanding or my religion to the pleasure of applause.

There were many whom either the desire of enjoying my pleasantry, or the pride of being thought to enjoy it, brought often into my company; but I was caressed in a particular manner by Democharès, a gentleman of a large estate, and a liberal disposition. My fortune being by no means exuberant, inclined me to be pleased with a friend who was willing to be entertained at his own charge. I became by daily invitations habituated to his table, and, as he believed my acquaintance necessary to the character of elegance, which he was desirous of establishing, I lived in all the luxury of affluence, without expence or dependence, and passed my life in a perpetual reciprocation of pleasure, with men brought together by similitude of accomplishments, or desire of improvement.

But all power has its sphere of activity, beyond which it produces no effect. Democharès, being called by his

affairs into the country, imagined that he should increase his popularity by coming among his neighbours accompanied by a man whose abilities were so generally allowed. The report presently spread through half the country that Democharés was arrived, and had brought with him the celebrated Hilarius, by whom such merriment would be excited, as had never been enjoyed or conceived before. I knew, indeed, the purpose for which I was invited, and, as men do not look diligently out for possible miscarriages, was pleased to find myself courted upon principles of interest, and considered as capable of reconciling factions, composing feuds, and uniting a whole province in social happiness.

After a few days spent in adjusting his domestick regulations, Democharés invited all the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to dinner, and did not forget to hint how much my presence was expected to heighten the pleasure of the feast. He informed me what prejudices my reputation had raised in my favour, and represented the satisfaction with which he should see me kindle up the blaze of merriment, and should remark the various effects that my fire would have upon such diversity of matter.

This declaration, by which he intended to quicken my vivacity, filled me with solicitude. I felt an ambition of shining which I never knew before; and was therefore embarrassed with an unusual fear of disgrace. I passed the night in planning out to myself the conversation of the coming day; recollected all my topicks of raillery, proposed proper subjects of ridicule, prepared smart replies to a thousand questions, accommodated answers to imaginary repartees, and formed a magazine of remarks, apophthegms, tales, and illustrations.

The morning broke at last in the midst of these busy meditations. I rose with the palpitations of a champion on the day of combat; and, notwithstanding all my efforts, found my spirits sunk under the weight of expectation. The company soon after began to drop in, and every one, at his entrance, was introduced to Hilarius. What con-

ception the inhabitants of this region had formed of a wit, I cannot yet discover; but observed that they all seemed, after the regular exchange of compliments, to turn away disappointed; and that while we waited for dinner, they cast their eyes first upon me, and then upon each other, like a theatrical assembly waiting for a show.

From the uneasiness of this situation I was relieved by the dinner; and as every attention was taken up by the business of the hour, I sunk quietly to a level with the rest of the company. But no sooner were the dishes removed, than, instead of cheerful confidence and familiar prattle, an universal silence again shewed their expectation of some unusual performance. My friend endeavoured to rouse them by healths and questions, but they answered him with great brevity, and immediately relapsed into their former taciturnity.

I had waited in hope of some opportunity to divert them, but could find no pass opened for a single sally; and who can be merry without an object of mirth? After a few faint efforts, which produced neither applause nor opposition, I was content to mingle with the mass, to put round the glass in silence, and solace myself with my own contemplations.

My friend looked round him; the guests stared at one another; and if now and then a few syllables were uttered with timidity and hesitation, there was none ready to make any reply. All our faculties were frozen, and every minute took away from our capacity of pleasing, and disposition to be pleased. Thus passed the hours to which so much happiness was decreed; the hours which had, by a kind of open proclamation, been devoted to wit, to mirth, and to Hilarius.

At last the night came on, and the necessity of parting freed us from the persecutions of each other. I heard them, as they walked along the court, murmuring at the loss of the day, and inquiring whether any man would pay a second visit to a house haunted by a wit.

Democharès, whose benevolence is greater than his

penetration, having flattered his hopes with the secondary honour which he was to gain by my sprightliness and elegance, and the affection with which he should be followed for a perpetual banquet of gaiety, was not able to conceal his vexation and resentment, nor would easily be convinced, that I had not sacrificed his interest to sullenness and caprice, and studiously endeavoured to disgust his guests, and suppressed my powers of delighting, in obstinate and premeditated silence. I am informed that the reproach of their ill reception is divided by the gentlemen of the country between us; some being of opinion that my friend is deluded by an impostor, who, though he has found some art of gaining his favour, is afraid to speak before men of more penetration; and others concluding that I think only London the proper theatre of my abilities, and disdain to exert my genius for the praise of rusticks.

I believe, Mr. Rambler, that it has sometimes happened to others, who have the good or ill fortune to be celebrated for wits, to fall under the same censures upon the like occasions. I hope therefore that you will prevent any misrepresentations of such failures, by remarking that invention is not wholly at the command of its possessor; that the power of pleasing is very often obstructed by the desire; that all expectation lessens surprize, yet some surprize is necessary to gaiety; and that those who desire to partake of the pleasure of wit must contribute to its production, since the mind stagnates without external ventilation, and that effervescence of the fancy, which flashes into transport, can be raised only by the infusion of dissimilar ideas.

N° 102. SATURDAY, *March* 9, 1751.

Ipsa quoque assiduo labuntur tempora motu,
Non secus ac flumen: neque enim consistere flumen,
Nec levis hora potest; sed ut unda impellitur undâ,
Urgeturque prior veniente, urgetque priorem,
Tempora sic fugiunt pariter, pariterque sequuntur.—OVID.

With constant motion as the moments glide,
Behold in running life the rolling tide!
For none can stem by art, or stop by pow'r,
The flowing ocean, or the fleeting hour:
But wave by wave pursued arrives on shore,
And each impell'd behind impels before:
So time on time revolving we descry;
So minutes follow, and so minutes fly.—ELPHINSTON.

"LIFE," says Seneca, "is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes: we first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better and more pleasing part of old age." The perusal of this passage having incited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations, and on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity; but soon recovering myself so far as to inquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion, I was told that we were launching out into the *ocean of life;* that we had already passed the streights of infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness, or negligence, of those who undertook to steer them; and that we were now on the main sea, abandoned to the winds and billows, without any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom

it was always in our power to choose among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness; and first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that sailed along seemed to behold with pleasure; but no sooner touched, than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond these islands all was darkness, nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked.

Before me, and on each side, was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist, that the most perspicacious eye could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many, who, by false intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmountable; but though it was impossible to sail against it, or to return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to steer with much care or prudence; for by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his consorts every moment sinking round him; and no sooner had the waves closed over them, than their fate and their misconduct were forgotten; the voyage was pursued with the same jocund confidence; every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was

dashed: nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course: if he turned aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference, or from weariness of their present condition; for not one of those who thus rushed upon destruction, failed, when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not now be given him; and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked being confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the stream of life, were visibly impaired in the course of the voyage; so that every passenger was certain, that how long soever he might, by favourable accidents, or by incessant vigilance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been expected to sadden the gay, and intimidate the daring, at least to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the solace of their labours; yet, in effect, none seemed less to expect destruction than those to whom it was most dreadful; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themselves; and those who knew their inability to bear the sight of the terrours that embarrassed their way, took care never to look forward, but found some amusement for the present moment, and generally entertained themselves by playing with HOPE, who was the constant associate of the voyage of life.

Yet all that HOPE ventured to promise, even to those whom she favoured most, was, not that they should escape, but that they should sink last; and with this promise every one was satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for

seeming to believe it. HOPE, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions; for, in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she redoubled her assurances of safety; and none were more busy in making provisions for a long voyage, than they whom all but themselves saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of life was the *gulph of* INTEMPERANCE, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which EASE spread couches of repose, and with shades, where PLEASURE warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of these rocks all who sailed on the ocean of life must necessarily pass. REASON, indeed, was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet by which they might escape; but very few could, by her entreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipulating that she should approach so near unto the rocks of PLEASURE, that they might solace themselves with a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

REASON was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of INTEMPERANCE, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulph was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom REASON was able to extricate, generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of PLEASURE, that they were unable to continue their course with the same strength and facility as before, but floated along timorously and feebly, en-

dangered by every breeze, and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk, by slow degrees, after long struggles and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach of the gulph of INTEMPERANCE.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches and stop the leaks of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of PLEASURE. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill, and some, indeed, were preserved by it from sinking, who had received only a single blow; but I remarked that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artists themselves continued afloat longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of life, the cautions had above the negligent, was, that they sunk later, and more suddenly; for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the streights of infancy, perish in the way, and at last were overset by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance, or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of PLEASURE, commonly subsided by sensible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and harassed themselves by labours that scarce HOPE herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown power, "Gaze not idly upon others when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquillity, when thou and they are equally endangered?" I looked, and seeing the gulph of INTEMPERANCE before me, started and awaked.

N° 103. Tuesday, *March* 12, 1751.

Scire volunt secreta domûs, atque inde timeri.—Juv.

They search the secrets of the house, and so
Are worshipp'd there, and fear'd for what they know.—Dryden.

Curiosity is one of the permanent and certain characteristicks of a vigorous intellect. Every advance into knowledge opens new prospects, and produces new incitements to further progress. All the attainments possible in our present state are evidently inadequate to our capacities of enjoyment; conquest serves no purpose but that of kindling ambition, discovery has no effect but of raising expectation; the gratification of one desire encourages another; and after all our labours, studies, and inquiries, we are continually at the same distance from the completion of our schemes, have still some wish importunate to be satisfied, and some faculty restless and turbulent for want of its enjoyment.

The desire of knowledge, though often animated by extrinsick and adventitious motives, seems on many occasions to operate without subordination to any other principle; we are eager to see and hear, without intention of referring our observations to a farther end; we climb a mountain for a prospect of the plain; we run to the strand in a storm, that we may contemplate the agitation of the water; we range from city to city, though we profess neither architecture nor fortification; we cross seas only to view nature in nakedness, or magnificence in ruins; we are equally allured by novelty of every kind, by a desert or a palace, a cataract or a cavern, by every thing rude and every thing polished, every thing great and every thing little; we do not see a thicket but with some temptation to enter it, nor remark an insect flying before us but with an inclination to pursue it.

This passion is, perhaps, regularly heightened in proportion as the powers of the mind are elevated and en-

larged. Lucan therefore introduces Cæsar speaking with dignity suitable to the grandeur of his designs and the extent of his capacity, when he declares to the high-priest of Egypt, that he has no desire equally powerful with that of finding the origin of the Nile, and that he would quit all the projects of the civil war for a sight of those fountains which had been so long concealed. And Homer, when he would furnish the Sirens with a temptation, to which his hero, renowned for wisdom, might yield without disgrace, makes them declare, that none ever departed from them but with increase of knowledge.

There is, indeed, scarce any kind of ideal acquirement which may not be applied to some use, or which may not at least gratify pride with occasional superiority; but whoever attends the motions of his own mind will find, that upon the first appearance of an object, or the first start of a question, his inclination to a nearer view, or more accurate discussion, precedes all thoughts of profit, or of competition; and that his desires take wing by instantaneous impulse, though their flight may be invigorated, or their efforts renewed, by subsequent considerations. The gratification of curiosity rather frees us from uneasiness than confers pleasure; we are more pained by ignorance, than delighted by instruction. Curiosity is the thirst of the soul; it inflames and torments us, and makes us taste every thing with joy, however otherwise insipid, by which it may be quenched.

It is evident that the earliest searchers after knowledge must have proposed knowledge only as their reward; and that science, though perhaps the nursling of interest, was the daughter of curiosity: for who can believe that they who first watched the course of the stars, foresaw the use of their discoveries to the facilitation of commerce, or the mensuration of time? They were delighted with the splendour of the nocturnal skies, they found that the lights changed their places; what they admired they were anxious to understand, and in time traced their revolutions.

There are, indeed, beings in the form of men, who appear satisfied with their intellectual possessions, and seem to live without desire of enlarging their conceptions; before whom the world passes without notice, and who are equally unmoved by nature or by art.

This negligence is sometimes only the temporary effect of a predominant passion: a lover finds no inclination to travel any path, but that which leads to the habitation of his mistress; a trader can spare little attention to common occurrences, when his fortune is endangered by a storm. It is frequently the consequence of a total immersion in sensuality; corporeal pleasures may be indulged till the memory of every other kind of happiness is obliterated; the mind, long habituated to a lethargick and quiescent state, is unwilling to wake to the toil of thinking; and though she may sometimes be disturbed by the obtrusion of new ideas, shrinks back again to ignorance and rest.

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the continual task of procuring the supports of life, denies all opportunities of deviation from their own narrow track, the number of such as live without the ardour of inquiry is very small, though many content themselves with cheap amusements, and waste their lives in researches of no importance.

There is no snare more dangerous to busy and excursive minds, than the cobwebs of petty inquisitiveness, which entangle them in trivial employments and minute studies, and detain them in a middle state, between the tediousness of total inactivity, and the fatigue of laborious efforts, enchant them at once with ease and novelty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learning. The necessity of doing something, and the fear of undertaking much, sinks the historian to a genealogist, the philosopher to a journalist of the weather, and the mathematician to a constructor of dials.

It is happy when those who cannot content themselves to be idle, nor resolve to be industrious, are at least employed without injury to others; but it seldom happens that we can contain ourselves long in a neutral state, or

forbear to sink into vice, when we are no longer soaring towards virtue.

Nugaculus was distinguished in his earlier years by an uncommon liveliness of imagination, quickness of sagacity, and extent of knowledge. When he entered into life, he applied himself with particular inquisitiveness to examine the various motives of human actions, the complicated influence of mingled affections, the different modifications of interest and ambition, and the various causes of miscarriage and success both in public and private affairs.

Though his friends did not discover to what purpose all these observations were collected, or how Nugaculus would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an incessant attention to changes of countenance, bursts of inconsideration, sallies of passion, and all the other casualties by which he used to trace a character, yet they could not deny the study of human nature to be worthy of a wise man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his discoveries, and listened with submissive modesty to his lectures on the uncertainty of inclination, the weakness of resolves, and the instability of temper, to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of a ruling passion.

Such was the first incitement of Nugaculus to a close inspection into the conduct of mankind. He had no interest in view, and therefore no design of supplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any intention to expose them; but having once found the art of engaging his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himself, but has passed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every rising character, and lived upon a small estate without any thought of increasing it.

He is, by continual application, become a general master of secret history, and can give an account of the intrigues, private marriages, competitions, and stratagems, of half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every

man's estate, the terms upon which every spendthrift raises his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure stipulated by every contract, and the expectations of every family from maiden aunts and childless acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every house, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler, and the land of another underlet by his steward; he can tell where the manor-house is falling, though large sums are yearly paid for repairs; and where the tenants are felling woods without the consent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence he is inadvertently guilty of a thousand acts of treachery. He sees no man's servant without draining him of his trust; he enters no family without flattering the children into discoveries; he is a perpetual spy upon the doors of his neighbours; and knows by long experience, at whatever distance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, and a pimp.

Nugaculus is not ill-natured, and therefore his industry has not hitherto been very mischievous to others, or dangerous to himself; but since he cannot enjoy this knowledge but by discovering it, and, if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffick like the chymists, and purchase one secret with another, he is every day more hated as he is more known; for he is considered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happiness in his power, and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

Thus has an intention, innocent at first, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, by an accidental declension of minuteness, betrayed Nugaculus, not only to a foolish, but vicious waste of a life which might have been honourably passed in publick services, or domestick virtues. He has lost his original intention, and given up his mind to employments that engross, but do not improve it.

N° 104. SATURDAY, *March* 16, 1751.

——*Nihil est quod credere de se*
Non possit.——JUVENAL.

None e'er rejects hyperboles of praise.

THE apparent insufficiency of every individual to his own happiness or safety, compels us to seek from one another assistance and support. The necessity of joint efforts for the execution of any great or extensive design, the variety of powers disseminated in the species, and the proportion between the defects and excellencies of different persons, demand an interchange of help, and communication of intelligence, and by frequent reciprocations of beneficence unite mankind in society and friendship.

If it can be imagined that there ever was a time when the inhabitants of any country were in a state of equality, without distinction of rank, or peculiarity of possessions, it is reasonable to believe that every man was then loved in proportion as he could contribute by his strength, or his skill, to the supply of natural wants; there was then little room for peevish dislike, or capricious favour; the affection admitted into the heart was rather esteem than tenderness; and kindness was only purchased by benefits. But when by force or policy, by wisdom or by fortune, property and superiority were introduced and established, so that many were condemned to labour for the support of a few, then they whose possessions swelled above their wants, naturally laid out their superfluities upon pleasure; and those who could not gain friendship by necessary offices, endeavoured to promote their interest by luxurious gratifications, and to create needs, which they might be courted to supply.

The desires of mankind are much more numerous than their attainments, and the capacity of imagination much larger than actual enjoyment. Multitudes are therefore unsatisfied with their allotment; and he that hopes to im-

prove his condition by the favour of another, and either finds no room for the exertion of great qualities, or perceives himself excelled by his rivals, will, by other expedients, endeavour to become agreeable where he cannot be important, and learn, by degrees, to number the *art of pleasing* among the most useful studies, and most valuable acquisitions.

This art, like others, is cultivated in proportion to its usefulness, and will always flourish most where it is most rewarded; for this reason we find it practised with great assiduity under absolute governments, where honours and riches are in the hands of one man, whom all endeavour to propitiate, and who soon becomes so much accustomed to compliance and officiousness, as not easily to find, in the most delicate address, that novelty which is necessary to procure attention.

It is discovered by a very few experiments, that no man is much pleased with a companion, who does not increase, in some respect, his fondness of himself; and, therefore, he that wishes rather to be led forward to prosperity by the gentle hand of favour, than to force his way by labour and merit, must consider with more care how to display his patron's excellencies than his own; that whenever he approaches, he may fill the imagination with pleasing dreams, and chase away disgust and weariness by a perpetual succession of delightful images.

This may, indeed, sometimes be effected by turning the attention upon advantages which are really possessed, or upon prospects which reason spreads before hope; for whoever can deserve or require to be courted, has generally, either from nature or from fortune, gifts, which he may review with satisfaction, and of which, when he is artfully recalled to the contemplation, he will seldom be displeased.

But those who have once degraded their understanding to an application only to the passions, and who have learned to derive hope from any other sources than in-

dustry and virtue, seldom retain dignity and magnanimity sufficient to defend them against the constant recurrence of temptation to falsehood. He that is too desirous to be loved, will soon learn to flatter, and when he has exhausted all the variations of honest praise, and can delight no longer with the civility of truth, he will invent new topicks of panegyrick, and break out into raptures at virtues and beauties conferred by himself.

The drudgeries of dependance would, indeed, be aggravated by hopelessness of success, if no indulgence was allowed to adulation. He that will obstinately confine his patron to hear only the commendations which he deserves, will soon be forced to give way to others that regale him with more compass of musick. The greatest human virtue bears no proportion to human vanity. We always think ourselves better than we are, and are generally desirous that others should think us still better than we think ourselves. To praise us for actions or dispositions which deserve praise, is not to confer a benefit, but to pay a tribute. We have always pretensions to fame, which, in our own hearts, we know to be disputable, and which we are desirous to strengthen by a new suffrage; we have always hopes which we suspect to be fallacious, and of which we eagerly snatch at every confirmation.

It may, indeed, be proper to make the first approaches under the conduct of truth, and to secure credit to future encomiums, by such praise as may be ratified by the conscience; but the mind once habituated to the lusciousness of eulogy, becomes, in a short time, nice and fastidious, and, like a vitiated palate, is incessantly calling for higher gratifications.

It is scarcely credible to what degree discernment may be dazzled by the mist of pride, and wisdom infatuated by the intoxication of flattery; or how low the genius may descend by successive gradations of servility, and how swiftly it may fall down the precipice of falsehood. No man can, indeed, observe, without indignation, on what

names, both of ancient and modern times, the utmost exuberance of praise has been lavished, and by what hands it has been bestowed. It has never yet been found, that the tyrant, the plunderer, the oppressor, the most hateful of the hateful, the most profligate of the profligate, have been denied any celebrations which they were willing to purchase, or that wickedness and folly have not found correspondent flatterers through all their subordinations, except when they have been associated with avarice or poverty, and have wanted either inclination or ability to hire a panegyrist.

As there is no character so deformed as to fright away from it the prostitutes of praise, there is no degree of encomiastick [illegible]eration which pride has refused. The emperours of Rome suffered themselves to be worshipped in their lives with altars and sacrifices; and, in an age more enlightened, the terms peculiar to the praise and worship of the Supreme Being, have been applied to wretches whom it was the reproach of humanity to number among men; and whom nothing but riches or power hindered those that read or wrote their deification, from hunting into the toils of justice, as disturbers of the peace of nature.

There are, indeed, many among the poetical flatterers, who must be resigned to infamy without vindication, and whom we must confess to have deserted the cause of virtue for pay; they have committed, against full conviction, the crime of obliterating the distinctions between good and evil, and, instead of opposing the encroachments of vice, have incited her progress, and celebrated her conquests. But there is a lower class of sycophants, whose understanding has not made them capable of equal guilt. Every man of high rank is surrounded with numbers, who have no other rule of thought or action, than his maxims and his conduct; whom the honour of being numbered among his acquaintance, reconciles to all his vices, and all his absurdities; and who easily persuade

themselves to esteem him, by whose regard they consider themselves as distinguished and exalted.

It is dangerous for mean minds to venture themselves within the sphere of greatness. Stupidity is soon blinded by the splendour of wealth, and cowardice is easily fettered in the shackles of dependance. To solicit patronage, is, at least, in the event, to set virtue to sale. None can be pleased without praise, and few can be praised without falsehood; few can be assiduous without servility, and none can be servile without corruption.

N° 105. TUESDAY, *March* 19, 1751.

——— *Animorum*
Impulsu, et cæcâ magnâque cupidine ducti.

Vain man runs headlong, to caprice resign'd;
Impell'd by passion, and with folly blind.

I WAS lately considering, among other objects of speculation, the new attempt of an *universal register*, an office, in which every man may lodge an account of his superfluities and wants, of whatever he desires to purchase or to sell. My imagination soon presented to me the latitude to which this design may be extended by integrity and industry, and the advantages which may be justly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once its reputation shall be so established, that neither reproach nor fraud shall be feared from it; when an application to it shall not be censured as the last resource of desperation, nor its informations suspected as the fortuitous suggestions of men obliged not to appear ignorant. A place where every exuberance may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied; where every lawful passion may find its gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction; where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual, may be brought together, and where all conditions of hu-

manity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation; must equally deserve the attention of the merchant and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who only lives to amuse himself with the various employments and pursuits of others. Nor will it be an uninstructing school to the greatest masters of method and dispatch, if such multiplicity can be preserved from embarrassment, and such tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this splendid project, and filling my thoughts with its regulation, its conveniencies, its variety, and its consequences, I sunk gradually into slumber; but the same images, though less distinct, still continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myself at the gate of an immense edifice, where innumerable multitudes were passing without confusion; every face on which I fixed my eyes, seemed settled in the contemplation of some important purpose, and every foot was hastened by eagerness and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I should be drawn, and remained awhile in the unpleasing state of an idler, where all other beings were busy, giving place every moment to those who had more importance in their looks. Ashamed to stand ignorant, and afraid to ask questions, at last I saw a lady sweeping by me, whom, by the quickness of her eyes, the agility of her steps, and a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long-loved protectress, CURIOSITY. "Great goddess," said I, "may thy votary be permitted to implore thy favour? if thou hast been my directress from the first dawn of reason, if I have followed thee through the maze of life with invariable fidelity, if I have turned to every new call, and quitted at thy nod one pursuit for another; if I have never stopped at the invitations of fortune, nor forgot thy authority in the bowers of pleasure, inform me now whither chance has conducted me."

"Thou art now," replied the smiling power, "in the presence of JUSTICE, and of TRUTH, whom the father of gods and men has has sent down to register the demands

and pretensions of mankind, that the world may at last be reduced to order, and that none may complain hereafter of being doomed to tasks for which they are unqualified, of possessing faculties for which they cannot find employment, or virtues that languish unobserved for want of opportunities to exert them; of being encumbered with superfluities which they would willingly resign, or of wasting away in desires which ought to be satisfied. JUSTICE is now to examine every man's wishes, and TRUTH is to record them: let us approach and observe the progress of this great transaction."

She then moved forward, and TRUTH, who knew her among the most faithful of her followers, beckoned her to advance, till we were placed near the seat of JUSTICE. The first who required the assistance of the office, came forward with a slow pace, and tumour of dignity, and shaking a weighty purse in his hand, demanded to be registered by TRUTH, as the MÆCENAS of the present age, the chief encourager of literary merit, to whom men of learning and wit might apply in any exigence or distress with certainty of succour. JUSTICE very mildly inquired, whether he had calculated the expence of such a declaration? whether he had been informed what number of petitioners would swarm about him? whether he could distinguish idleness and negligence from calamity, ostentation from knowledge, or vivacity from wit? To these questions he seemed not well provided with a reply, but repeated his desire to be recorded as a patron. JUSTICE then offered to register his proposal on these conditions, that he should never suffer himself to be flattered; that he should never delay an audience when he had nothing to do; and that he should never encourage followers without intending to reward them. These terms were too hard to be accepted; for what, said he, is the end of patronage, but the pleasure of reading dedications, holding multitudes in suspence, and enjoying their hopes, their fears, and their anxiety, flattering them to assiduity, and, at last, dismissing them

for impatience? JUSTICE heard his confession, and ordered his name to be posted upon the gate among cheats and robbers, and publick nuisances, which all were by that notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the discoverer of a new art of education, by which languages and sciences might be taught to all capacities, and all inclinations, without fear of punishment, pain of confinement, loss of any part of the gay mien of ignorance, or any obstruction of the necessary progress in dress, dancing, or cards.

JUSTICE and TRUTH did not trouble this great adept with many inquiries; but finding his address awkward and his speech barbarous, ordered him to be registered as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might serve in any post where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required.

A man of a very grave and philosophick aspect, required notice to be given of his intention to set out, a certain day, on a submarine voyage, and of his willingness to take in passengers for no more than double the price at which they might sail above water. His desire was granted, and he retired to a convenient stand, in expectation of filling his ship, and growing rich in a short time by the secrecy, safety, and expedition of the passage.

Another desired to advertize the curious, that he had, for the advancement of true knowledge, contrived an optical instrument, by which those who laid out their industry on memorials of the changes of the wind, might observe the direction of the weather-cocks on the hitherside of the lunar world.

Another wished to be known as the authour of an invention, by which cities or kingdoms might be made warm in winter by a single fire, a kettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle by which a man might bid defiance to floods, and continue floating in an inundation, without any inconvenience, till the water should subside. JUSTICE considered these projects as of no importance but to their

authours, and therefore scarcely condescended to examine them: but TRUTH refused to admit them into the register.

Twenty different pretenders came in one hour to give notice of an universal medicine, by which all diseases might be cured or prevented, and life protracted beyond the age of NESTOR. But JUSTICE informed them, that one universal medicine was sufficient, and she would delay the notification till she saw who could longest preserve his own life.

A thousand other claims and offers were exhibited and examined. I remarked, among this mighty multitude, that, of intellectual advantages, many had great exuberance, and few confessed any want; of every art there were a hundred professors for a single pupil; but of other attainments, such as riches, honours, and preferments, I found none that had too much, but thousands and ten thousands that thought themselves entitled to a larger dividend.

It often happened, that old misers, and women married at the close of life, advertized their want of children; nor was it uncommon for those who had a numerous offspring, to give notice of a son or daughter to be spared; but, though appearances promised well on both sides, the bargain seldom succeeded; for they soon lost their inclination to adopted children, and proclaimed their intentions to promote some scheme of public charity: a thousand proposals were immediately made, among which they hesitated till death precluded the decision.

As I stood looking on this scene of confusion, TRUTH condescended to ask me, what was my business at her office? I was struck with the unexpected question, and awaked by my efforts to answer it.

N° 106. Saturday, *March* 23, 1751.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.—Cic.

Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.

It is necessary to the success of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumstances or characters, and enter the heart on that side where the passions stand ready to receive it. A lady seldom listens with attention to any praise but that of her beauty; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffick: and the authour will scarcely be pleased without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conspiracies against genius, and the slow progress of merit; or some praises of the magnanimity of those who encounter poverty and contempt in the cause of knowledge, and trust for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of posterity.

An assurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation, is the settled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers. To raise *monuments more durable than brass, and more conspicuous than pyramids*, has been long the common boast of literature; but, among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themselves, far the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to dispose them, see their edifices perish as they are towering to completion, and those few that for awhile attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and soon sink by the saps of time.

No place affords a more striking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a publick library; for who can see the wall crowded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate inquiry, now scarcely known but by the catalogue, and preserved only to increase the pomp of learning, without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavours, how

often imagination has anticipated the praises of futurity, how many statues have risen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagonists, and dogmatism has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power?

——— *Non unquam dedit*
Documenta fors majora, quàm fragili loco
Starent superbi.

Insulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice,
On swelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authours whose performances are thus treasured up in magnificent obscurity, most are forgotten, because they never deserved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the stratagem of intrigue, or the servility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whose works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praises by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legislators of science. Curiosity is naturally excited, their volumes after long inquiry are found, but seldom reward the labour of the search. Every period of time has produced these bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up awhile by the breath of fashion, and then break at once, and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loss of ancient writers whose characters have survived their works; but, perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we should find them only the Granvilles, Montagues, Stepneys, and Sheffields of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raised to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied, that many have sunk into oblivion, whom it were unjust to number with this despicable class. Various kinds of literary fame seem destined to various measures of duration. Some spread into exuberance with a very speedy growth, but soon wither

and decay; some rise more slowly, but last long. Parnassus has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among those whose reputation is exhausted in a short time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of present incidents or characters which strongly interest the passions, and engage universal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we discuss a question which every one is desirous to understand, which is debated in every assembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when we display the faults or virtues of him whose publick conduct has made almost every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of such productions all the motives of interest and vanity concur; the disputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his passion, and every man is desirous to inform himself concerning affairs so vehemently agitated and variously represented.

It is scarcely to be imagined, through how many subordinations of interest the ardour of party is diffused; and what multitudes fancy themselves affected by every satire or panegyrick on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occasion to mention him with praise or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, as he wishes to confirm his opinion, and to strengthen his party, will diligently peruse every paper from which he can hope for sentiments like his own. An object, however small in itself, if placed near to the eye, will engross all the rays of light; and a transaction, however trivial, swells into importance when it presses immediately on our attention. He that shall peruse the political pamphlets of any past reign, will wonder why they were so eagerly read, or so loudly praised. Many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confusion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critick; and the time is coming, when the compositions of later hirelings shall lie equally despised. In proportion as those who write on temporary subjects, are

exalted above their merit at first, they are afterwards depressed below it; nor can the brightest elegance of diction, or most artful subtilty of reasoning, hope for so much esteem from those whose regard is no longer quickened by curiosity or pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertists, even when they contend for philosophical or theological truth, to be soon laid aside and slighted. Either the question is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and opposition; or mankind despair of understanding it, and grow weary of disturbance, content themselves with quiet ignorance, and refuse to be harassed with labours which they have no hopes of recompencing with knowledge.

The authours of new discoveries may surely expect to be reckoned among those whose writings are secure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obscures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we seldom look back to the arguments upon which it was first established, or can bear that tediousness of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its authour was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakness of novelty against obstinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philosophy is derived from Boyle's discovery of the qualities of the air; yet of those who now adopt or enlarge his theory, very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected; we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without inquiring what cavils were produced against him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themselves to studies boundless and inexhaustible, as experiments in natural philosophy. These are always lost in successive compilations, as new advances are made, and former observations become more familiar. Others spend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford

materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themselves overwhelmed by subsequent collectors, that equally destroy the memory of their predecessors by amplification, transposition, or contraction. Every new system of nature gives birth to a swarm of expositors, whose business is to explain and illustrate it, and who can hope to exist no longer than the founder of their sect preserves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of composition from which an authour, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully studied human nature, and can well describe it, may with most reason flatter his ambition. Bacon, among all his pretensions to the regard of posterity, seems to have pleased himself chiefly with his Essays, *which come home to men's business and bosoms*, and of which, therefore, he declares his expectation, that they *will live as long as books last*. It may, however, satisfy an honest and benevolent mind to have been useful, though less conspicuous; nor will he that extends his hope to higher rewards, be so much anxious to obtain praise, as to discharge the duty which Providence assigns him.

N° 107. TUESDAY, *March* 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere versibus ambo
Cœpere: alternos musæ meminisse volebant.—VIRG.

On themes alternate now the swains recite;
The muses in alternate themes delight.—ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the various censures, which the unavoidable comparison of my performances with those of my predecessors has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of those changes of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhausted novelty, and of that intermixture of subjects, or alternation of manner, by which other writers relieved weariness, and awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and solemn subjects in the same paper, because it seems absurd for an authour to counteract himself, to press at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, or give medicines, which, like the double poison of Dryden, destroy the force of one another. I have endeavoured sometimes to divert, and sometimes to elevate; but have imagined it an useless attempt to disturb merriment by solemnity, or interrupt seriousness by drollery. Yet I shall this day publish two letters of very different tendency, which I hope, like tragi-comedy, may chance to please, even when they are not critically approved.

TO THE RAMBLER.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleasure in listening to the conversation of learned men, especially when they discourse of things which I do not understand; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many disputes about the *alteration of the stile*, which, they say, is to be made by act of parliament.

One day, when my mamma was gone out of the room, I asked a very great scholar what the stile was? He told me, he was afraid I should hardly understand him when he informed me, that it was the stated and established method of computing time. It was not indeed, likely that I should understand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we should be at so much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time past, or the time to come; but I have considered them both by myself, and think it as foolish to count time that is gone, as money that is spent; and as for the time which is to come, it only seems farther off by counting; and therefore, when any pleasure is promised me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I have since listened very attentively to every one that talked upon this subject, of whom the greater part seem not to understand it better than myself; for though they often hint how much the nation has been mistaken, and rejoice that we are at last growing wiser than our ancestors, I have never been able to discover from them, that any body has died sooner or been married later for counting time wrong; and, therefore, I began to fancy that there was a great bustle with little consequence.

At last two friends of my papa, Mr. Cycle, and Mr. Starlight, being, it seems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new stile. Sweet Mr. Starlight—I am sure I shall love his name as long as I live; for he told Cycle roundly, with a fierce look, that we should never be right without a *year of confusion*. Dear Mr. Rambler, did you ever hear any thing so charming? a whole year of confusion! When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confusion worth a thousand nights of rest; and if I can but see a year of confusion, a whole year of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feast, and there a masquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and messages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and visits, and frolicks, and new fashions, I shall not care what they do with the rest of the time, nor whether they count it by the old stile or the new; for I am resolved to break loose from the nursery in the tumult, and play my part among the rest; and it will be strange if I cannot get a husband and a chariot in the year of confusion.

Cycle, who is neither so young nor so handsome as Starlight, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning; and indeed, if it should come only to this, I think the new stile is a delightful thing; for my mamma says I shall go to court when I am sixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of restraint will soon be at an end. It is strange, that with all the plots that have been laid against time,

they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or interest, get them but for once to destroy eleven months, and then I shall be as old as some married ladies. But this is desired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. Starlight's scheme; for nothing surely could please me like a year of confusion, when I shall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen, and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-master one day, and the next for the musick master; but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and spend all my time without tasks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to prescribed hours or family rules.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

PROPERANTIA.

MR. RAMBLER,

I WAS seized this morning with an unusual pensiveness, and, finding that books only served to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenness of the air and brightness of the sun.

As I wandered wrapped up in thought, my eyes were struck with the hospital for the reception of deserted infants, which I surveyed with pleasure, till by a natural train of sentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what shelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which perhaps are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick must be the transition from deluded virtue to shameless guilt, and from shameless guilt to hopeless wretchedness?

The anguish that I felt, left me no rest till I had, by your means, addressed myself to the publick on behalf of those forlorn creatures, the women of the town; whose misery here might satisfy the most rigourous censor, and whose participation of our common nature might surely induce us to endeavour, at least, their preservation from eternal punishment.

These were all once, if not virtuous, at least innocent; and might still have continued blameless and easy, but for the arts and insinuations of those whose rank, fortune, or education, furnished them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the situation of that woman, who, being forsaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the necessity of turning prostitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

It cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful course of life, with shame, horrour, and regret; but where can they hope for refuge? "*The world is not their friend, nor the world's law.*" Their sighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their misery, and threaten them with want or a gaol, if they shew the least design of escaping from their bondage.

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is a task too hard for mortals; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the most limited power: yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the most wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal disregard of policy and goodness.

There are places, indeed, set apart, to which these unhappy creatures may resort, when the diseases of incontinence seize upon them; but if they obtain a cure, to what are they reduced? Either to return with the small remains of beauty to their former guilt, or perish in the streets with nakedness and hunger.

How frequently have the gay and thoughtless, in their evening frolicks, seen a band of these miserable females, covered with rags, shivering with cold, and pining with hunger; and, without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon the cruelty of those who perhaps first seduced them by caresses of fondness, or magnificence of promises, go on to reduce others to the same wretchedness by the same means!

To stop the increase of this deplorable multitude, is un-

doubtedly the first and most pressing consideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and severity are properly employed. But surely those whom passion or interest has already depraved, have some claim to compassion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themselves. Nor will they long groan in their present afflictions, if none were to refuse them relief, but those that owe their exemption from the same distress only to their wisdom and their virtue. I am, &c.

AMICUS.

N° 108. SATURDAY, *March* 30, 1751.

———Sapere aude;
Incipe. Vivendi rectè qui prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.—HOR.

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise;
He who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,
Till the whole stream, which stopp'd him, should be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on.—COWLEY.

AN ancient poet, unreasonably discontented at the present state of things, which his system of opinions obliged him to represent in its worst form, has observed of the earth, "that its greater part is covered by the uninhabitable ocean; that of the rest some is encumbered with naked mountains, and some lost under barren sands; some scorched with unintermitted heat, and some petrified with perpetual frost; so that only a few regions remain for the production of fruits, the pasture of cattle, and the accommodation of man."

The same observation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our present state. When we have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irresistibly engrossed by the tyranny of custom; all that passes in regulating

the superficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the disposal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassitude and languor; we shall find that part of our duration very small of which we can truly call ourselves masters, or which we can spend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are lost in a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recurrence of the same employments; many of our provisions for ease or happiness are always exhausted by the present day; and a great part of our existence serves no other purpose, than that of enabling us to enjoy the rest.

Of the few moments which are left in our disposal, it may reasonably be expected, that we should be so frugal, as to let none of them slip from us without some equivalent; and perhaps it might be found, that as the earth, however straitened by rocks and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to consume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental distraction, would yet afford us a large space vacant to the exercise of reason and virtue; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances; and that we squander much of our allowance, even while we think it sparing and insufficient.

This natural and necessary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us insensible of the negligence with which we suffer them to slide away. We never consider ourselves as possessed at once of time sufficient for any great design, and therefore indulge ourselves in fortuitous amusements. We think it unnecessary to take an account of a few supernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were exposed to a thousand chances of disturbance and interruption.

It is observable, that, either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjust great things by division, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive surfaces we can only take a

survey, as the parts succeed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive till they are united into masses. Thus we break the vast periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of fortune is by small expences, by the profusion of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss business, and exclude pleasure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that should steadily and resolutely assign to any science or language those interstitial vacancies which intervene in the most crowded variety of diversion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and discover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perseverance, than from violent efforts and sudden desires; efforts which are soon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and desires, which, if they are indulged too often, will shake off the authority of reason, and range capriciously from one object to another.

The disposition to defer every important design to a time of leisure, and a state of settled uniformity, proceeds generally from a false estimate of the human powers. If we except those gigantick and stupendous intelligences who are said to grasp a system by intuition, and bound forward from one series of conclusions to another, without regular steps through intermediate propositions, the most successful students make their advances in knowledge by

short flights, between each of which the mind may lie at rest. For every single act of progression a short time is sufficient; and it is only necessary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to severe and laborious meditation; and when a successful attack on knowledge has been made, the student recreates himself with the contemplation of his conquest, and forbears another incursion, till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiosity calls upon him for fresh gratifications. Whether the time of intermission is spent in company, or in solitude, in necessary business, or in voluntary levities, the understanding is equally abstracted from the object of inquiry; but perhaps, if it be detained by occupations less pleasing, it returns again to study with greater alacrity than when it is glutted with ideal pleasures, and surfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied impossibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invigorated by the necessity of exerting them in short intervals, as the force of a current is increased by the contraction of its channel.

From some cause like this, it has probably proceeded, that among those who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have risen to eminence in opposition to all the obstacles which external circumstances could place in their way, amidst the tumult of business, the distresses of poverty, or the dissipations of a wandering and unsettled state. A great part of the life of Erasmus was one continual peregrination; ill supplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means, by unshaken constancy, and a vigilant improvement of those hours, which, in the midst of the most restless activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the same condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and solicitation, and so much versed in common life, that he

has transmitted to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world, such application to books, that he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he sufficiently discovers, by informing us, that the "Praise of Folly," one of his most celebrated performances, was composed by him on the road to Italy; *ne totum illud tempus, quo equo fuit insidendum, illiteratis fabulis tereretur*, lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattled away without regard to literature.

An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto, that *time was his estate;* an estate indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be overrun with noxious plants, or laid out for shew rather than for use.

N° 109. TUESDAY, *April* 2, 1751.

Gratum est, quod patriæ civem populoque dedisti,
Si facis, ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum, et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit, quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus instituas.—JUV.

Grateful the gift! a member to the state,
If you that member useful shall create;
Train'd both to war, and, when the war shall cease,
As fond, as fit t' improve the arts of peace.
For much it boots which way you train your boy,
The hopeful object of your future joy.—ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you seem to have taken a view sufficiently extensive of the miseries of life, and have employed much of your speculation on mournful subjects, you have not yet exhausted the whole stock of human infelicity. There is still a species of wretchedness which escapes your ob-

servation, though it might supply you with many sage remarks, and salutary cautions.

I cannot but imagine the start of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this instant see the Rambler snuffing his candle, rubbing his spectacles, stirring his fire, locking out interruption, and settling himself in his easy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without disturbance. For, whether it be that continued sickness or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterness of being; or that you imagine none but yourself able to discover what I suppose has been seen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world; whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the publick; or fancy that you have some particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain, that whatever be your subject, melancholy for the most part bursts in upon your speculation, your gaiety is quickly overcast, and though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleasantry, they are seldom dismissed but with heavy hearts.

That I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own syllables of sadness, I will inform you that I was condemned by some disastrous influence to be an only son, born to the apparent prospect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life when satiety of common diversions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenseness. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feasts, and dances, and bagpipes: congratulations were sent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents discovered in my first cries such tokens of future virtue and understanding, that they declared themselves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happiness and the increase of their estate.

The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good com-

pany, rattled in chariots, glittered in playhouses, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time called in as auxiliaries against the intrusion of thought.

When there is such a parity between two persons associated for life, the dejection which the husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for want of superiority, sinks him to submissiveness. My mamma therefore governed the family without controul; and except that my father still retained some authority in the stables, and, now and then, after a supernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or china dish to prove his sovereignty, the whole course of the year was regulated by her direction, the servants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or dismissed at her discretion.

She therefore thought herself entitled to the superintendance of her son's education; and when my father, at the instigation of the parson, faintly proposed that I should be sent to school, very positively told him, that she should not suffer so fine a child to be ruined; that she never knew any boys at a grammar-school that could come into a room without blushing, or sit at a table without some awkward uneasiness; that they were always putting themselves into danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company; and that, for her part, she would rather follow me to the grave, than see me tear my clothes, and hang down my head, and sneak about with dirty shoes and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his proposal than to appear wise and manly, soon acquiesced, since I was not to live by my learning; for indeed he had known very few students that had not some stiffness in their manner. They therefore agreed, that a domestick tutor should be procured, and hired an honest gentleman of mean conversation and narrow sentiments, but whom, having passed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly

concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a scholar. He thought himself sufficiently exalted by being placed at the same table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmost flexibility of submission to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, lest I should mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally brushed my coat before he dismissed me into the parlour.

He had no occasion to complain of too burdensome an employment; for my mother very judiciously considered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and suffered me not to pass any more time in his apartment than my lesson required. When I was summoned to my task, she enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admonished not to lean on my chair, cross my legs, or swing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very seriously deliberated upon his total dismission, because I began, she said, to learn his manner of sticking on my hat, and had his bend in my shoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I escaped all these depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myself of every appearance of childish diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickness of my replies; and many a scholar, five years older than myself, have I dashed into confusion by the steadiness of my countenance, silenced by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At fourteen I was completely skilled in all the niceties of dress, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a French loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive finery; but as

every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in Brussels lace.

The next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart now disdained the instructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a small annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

In a short time I came to London, and as my father was well known among the higher classes of life, soon obtained admission to the most splendid assemblies and most crowded card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded; the ladies praised the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the softness of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themselves to my notice; and invited, by a thousand oblique solicitations, my attendance to the playhouse, and my salutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception; I passed every morning in dress, every afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness, by varied amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness, nearly bordering on compassion; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings, by treating me with contempt. One of these witlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffee-house the price of patches; and another whis-

pered that he wondered why Miss Frisk did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made my addresses, suffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either use or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr. Rambler, that I have reason to complain; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find that, though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gaiety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt.

I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

N° 110. SATURDAY, *April* 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum
Lux iter est, et clara dies, et gratia simplex.
Spem sequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris,
Ad quæ non veniunt præsentis gaudia vitæ,
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.—PRUDENTIUS.

We through this maze of life one Lord obey,
Whose light and grace unerring, lead the way.
By hope and faith secure of future bliss,
Gladly the joys of present life we miss:
For baffled mortals still attempt in vain,
Present and future bliss at once to gain.—F. LEWIS.

THAT to please the Lord and Father of the universe, is the supreme interest of created and dependent beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed; and since all rational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated the duties prescribed to them, the fear of being rejected, or punished by God, has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of divine favour, therefore constitute a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least shew the general consent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of the divine nature. That God will forgive, may, indeed, be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion; for, though the knowledge of his existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection or regard of him, whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a Creator, whom he must consider as a governour too pure to be pleased, and too severe to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wise, and infinitely

powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A constant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terrestrial diligence; and therefore the progress of life could only have been the natural descent of negligent despair from crime to crime, had not the universal persuasion of forgiveness, to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled those to the paths of virtue whom their passions had solicited aside; and animated to new attempts, and firmer perseverance, those whom difficulty had discouraged, or negligence surprized.

In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing his justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty, when a greater is incurred.

Incorporated minds will always feel some inclination towards exteriour acts and ritual observances. Ideas not represented by sensible objects are fleeting, variable, and evanescent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by some certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once establish the necessary proportion between crimes and sufferings, might securely rest upon his performance of the expiation; but while safety remains the reward only of mental purity, he is always afraid lest he should decide too soon in his own favour; lest he should not have felt the pangs of true contrition; lest he should mistake satiety for detestation, or imagine that his passions are subdued when they are only sleeping.

From this natural and reasonable diffidence arose, in humble and timorous piety, a disposition to confound

penance with repentance, to repose on human determinations, and to receive from some judicial sentence the stated and regular assignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without resource: we seek in the knowledge of others a succour for our own ignorance, and are ready to trust any that will undertake to direct us when we have no confidence in ourselves.

This desire to ascertain by some outward marks the state of the soul, and this willingness to calm the conscience by some settled method, have produced, as they are diversified in their effects by various tempers and principles, most of the disquisitions and rules, the doubts and solutions, that have embarrassed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable scruples concerning the necessary measures of sorrow, and adequate degrees of self-abhorrence; and these rules, corrupted by fraud, or debased by credulity, have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition, easily understood. *Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God.* Sorrow and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts, but adjuncts of repentance; yet they are too closely connected with it to be easily separated; for they not only mark its sincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obstinacy, by which his safety or happiness in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced, that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger, considered as imminent, na-

turally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terrour, is every moment seized with useless anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horrour, or panting with security; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the divine favour, and every danger more dreadful than the danger of final condemnation?

Retirement from the cares and pleasures of the world has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This at least is evident, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions; and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances, and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, and business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure, is doubtless necessary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miscarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only question in which mistake cannot be rectified.

Austerities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and roused, by which the attractions of pleasure are interrupted, and the chains of sensuality are broken. It is observed by one of the fathers, that *he*

who restrains himself in the use of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden. Abstinence, if nothing more, is, at least, a cautious retreat from the utmost verge of permission, and confers that security which cannot be reasonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of destruction, or delights to approach the pleasures which he knows it fatal to partake. Austerity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diseases of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we should readily have recourse, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and sum of repentance is a change of life. That sorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our escape, that austerity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But sorrow and terrour must naturally precede reformation; for what other cause can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himself alarmed by his conscience, anxious for the attainment of a better state, and afflicted by the memory of his past faults, may justly conclude, that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of strengthening his conviction, to impress upon his mind such a sense of the divine presence, as may overpower the blandishments of secular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holiness to another, till death shall set him free from doubt and contest, misery and temptation.

> What better can we do than prostrate fall
> Before him reverent; and there confess
> Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
> Wat'ring the ground, and with our sighs the air
> Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
> Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?

P. L. X. 1087–92.

N° 111. Tuesday, *April* 9, 1751.

Φρονεῖν γὰρ ὃι ταχεῖς, οὐκ ἀσφαλεῖς.—Sophoc.

Disaster always waits on early wit.

It has been observed, by long experience, that late springs produce the greatest plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the most part liberally recompenced by the exuberance and fecundity of the ensuing seasons; the blossoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the sun is high, escape those chilling blasts, and nocturnal frosts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the first smiles of vernal beauty, destroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the gem, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of persuading the young and sprightly part of my readers, upon whom the spring naturally forces my attention, to learn, from the great process of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between speed and precipitation; to prosecute their designs with calmness, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprize and hope: having yet no occasion of comparing our force with any opposing power, we naturally form presumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obstruction and impediment will give way before us. The first repulses rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it suspects its own weakness, or submits to sap the difficulties which it expected to subdue by storm. Before disappointments have enforced the dictates of philosophy, we believe it in our power to shorten the interval between the first cause and the last effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding industry, and fancy that, by increasing the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promises of time sufficient for the regular maturation of our schemes, and a long enjoyment of our acquisitions, we are eager to seize the present moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without suffering it to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the varieties of delight into a narrow compass; but age seldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of life to steal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or slow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of some fortuitous occurrence, or drowsy equilibrations of undetermined counsel: whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition, and found them delusive, become less anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death shocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts that the time of trifling is past.

A perpetual conflict with natural desires seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age we must labour to recal the fire and impetuosity of youth; in youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be borne at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet, since the fear of missing what we seek must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours, must resolve to en-

counter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures, and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation, often raises his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended by some, even to the gifts of nature; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge, appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined, to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; but have observed, that after a short effort they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the even and regular perseverance of slower understandings.

It frequently happens, that applause abates diligence. Whoever finds himself to have performed more than was demanded, will be contented to spare the labour of unnecessary performances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He whom success has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himself able to leave behind whenever he shall again summon his force to the contest. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate attention, and weaken constancy; nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius, too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being caressed, distinguished, and admired, easily seduces the student from literary solitude. He is ready to follow the call which summons him to hear his own praise, and

which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleasures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleasures which he conceives inexhaustible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to distrust.

These evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or considered as inseparable from an early display of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly escaped by prudence and resolution, and must therefore be recounted rather as consolations to those who are less liberally endowed, than as discouragements to such as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the persecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raise the flames of unlawful love; yet, among the ladies whom prudence or modesty have made most eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniencies of an amiable form? or would have purchased safety by the loss of charms?

Neither grace of person, nor vigour of understanding, are to be regarded otherwise than as blessings, as means of happiness indulged by the Supreme Benefactor; but the advantages of either may be lost by too much eagerness to obtain them. A thousand beauties in their first blossom, by an imprudent exposure to the open world, have suddenly withered at the blast of infamy; and men who might have subjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praise of their first productions from academical retirement, and wasted their days in vice and dependance. The virgin who too soon aspires to celebrity and conquest, perishes by childish vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltless indiscretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loses those years which might have been most usefully employed, the years of youth, of spirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable absurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need it most; we are in haste to meet enemies whom we have not strength to overcome,

and to undertake tasks which we cannot perform: and as he that once miscarries does not easily persuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual struggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obscurity.

N° 112. Saturday, *April* 13, 1751.

In mea vesanas habui dispendia vires,
Et valui pœnas fortis in ipse meas.—Ovid.

Of strength pernicious to myself I boast;
The pow'rs I have were giv'n me to my cost.—F. Lewis.

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We are taught by Celsus, that health is best preserved by avoiding settled habits of life, and deviating sometimes into slight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exercise, interrupting the successions of rest and labour, and mingling hardships with indulgence. The body, long accustomed to stated quantities and uniform periods, is disordered by the smallest irregularity; and since we cannot adjust every day by the balance or barometer, it is fit sometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may be able to comply with necessary affairs, or strong inclinations. He that too long observes nice punctualities, condemns himself to voluntary imbecility, and will not long escape the miseries of disease.

The same laxity of regimen is equally necessary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual susceptibility of occasional pleasure. Long confinement to the same company which perhaps similitude of taste brought first together, quickly contracts the faculties, and makes a thousand things offensive that are in themselves indifferent; a man accustomed to hear only the echo of his own sentiments, soon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratifications of mankind.

In things which are not immediately subject to reli-

gious or moral consideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Sensibility may, by an incessant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness inconsistent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by the gentlest touch. He that pleases himself too much with minute exactness, and submits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or address, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the crowd of life, be harassed with innumerable distresses, from which those who have not in the same manner increased their sensations find no disturbance. His exotick softness will shrink at the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plant transplanted to northern nurseries, from the dews and sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and, therefore, if we allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any errour or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease to some other period of existence. It is well known, that, exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences; and that the softest bloom of roseate virginity repels the eye with excrescences and discolorations. The perceptions as well as the senses may be improved to our own disquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise in time an artificial fastidiousness, which shall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, shew us the naked skeleton of every delight, and present us only with the pains of pleasure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peevishness, indeed, would perhaps very little disturb the peace of mankind, were it always the consequence of superfluous delicacy; for it is the privilege only of deep reflection, or lively fancy, to destroy happiness by art and refinement. But by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undisputed superiority, the dull and thoughtless may likewise acquire the power of tormenting themselves and others, and become suffi-

ciently ridiculous or hateful to those who are within sight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally found to be morose, fretful, and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; soon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any association, but with those that will watch their nod, and submit themselves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the necessity of consulting any inclination but their own.

The irascibility of this class of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, such as are incident to understandings not far extended beyond the instincts of animal life; but, unhappily, he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long cessations of anger. There are many veterans of luxury upon whom every noon brings a paroxysm of violence, fury, and execration; they never sit down to their dinner without finding the meat so injudiciously bought, or so unskilfully dressed, such blunders in the seasoning, or such improprieties in the sauce, as can scarcely be expiated without blood; and, in the transports of resentment, make very little distinction between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their discontent, upon all whom fortune exposes to the storm.

It is not easy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependance on a peevish man. In every other state of inferiority the certainty of pleasing is perpetually increased by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindness and confidence are strengthened by every new act of trust, and proof of fidelity. But peevishness sacrifices to a momentary offence the obsequiousness or usefulness of half a life, and, as more is performed, increases her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his sons. The boy was dismissed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank;

cautioned against all opposition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perseverance by the hopes of supporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of sentiment; and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice; patiently endured contradictory reproofs; heard false accusations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply; laughed obstreperously at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; asked questions about the universal decay of trade; admired the strength of those heads by which the price of stocks is changed and adjusted; and behaved with such prudence and circumspection, that after six years the will was made, and Juvenculus was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him: the old man tore his will, and being then perceptibly declining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are embittered by age or solitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and spiteful superintendance of domestick trifles. Eriphile has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of servants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preserving tapestry from the moths, and the carelessness of the sluts whom she employs in brushing it. It is her business every morning to visit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt, and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpose but to preserve the neatness of a house and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleasure, nor aspiration after virtue, while she is engrossed by the great employment of keeping gravel from grass, and wainscot from dust. Of three amiable nieces she has declared herself an irreconcileable enemy to one, because she broke

off a tulip with her hoop; to another, because she spilt her coffee on a Turkey carpet; and to the third, because she let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourse of visits, because company makes a house dirty; and resolves to confine herself more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish lenity.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow minds, and, except when it is the effect of anguish and disease, by which the resolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble to bear the lightest addition to its miseries, proceeds from an unreasonable persuasion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy against it is, to consider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of suffering perturbation and uneasiness from causes unworthy of our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, and suffers the course of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadvertencies, or offences, delivers up himself to the direction of the wind, and loses all that constancy and equanimity which constitute the chief praise of a wise man.

The province of prudence lies between the greatest things and the least; some surpass our power by their magnitude, and some escape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indispensable business of life will afford sufficient exercise to every understanding; and such is the limitation of the human powers, that by attention to trifles we must let things of importance pass unobserved: when we examine a mite with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's interest to be pleased, will need little proof; that it is his interest to please others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not less necessary to happiness than to virtue, that he rid his mind of passions which make him uneasy to himself, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects, and obstruct his improvement.

N° 113. TUESDAY, *April* 16, 1751.

———*Uxorem, Posthume, ducis?*
Dic quâ Tisiphone, quibus exagitare colubris?—JUV.

A sober man like thee to change his life!
What fury would possess thee with a wife?—DRYDEN.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I KNOW not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat censure with contempt. We owe so much reverence to the wisdom of mankind, as justly to wish, that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of other suffrages; and since guilt and infamy must have the same effect upon intelligencies unable to pierce beyond external appearances, and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a false charge, lest we should countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accusation with supercilious silence, is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villainy, and inspirited by innocence. The wall of brass which Horace erects upon a clear conscience, may be sometimes raised by impudence or power; and we should always wish to preserve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces which wickedness cannot assume.

For this reason I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or sullen resignation, a reproach, which is, at least in my opinion, unjust; but will lay my case honestly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

Whether you will be able to preserve your boasted impartiality, when you hear, that I am considered as an adversary by half the female world, you may surely pardon me for doubting, notwithstanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourself entitled by your age, your learning, your abstraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. Rambler, has often overpowered the resolu-

tions of the firm, and the reasonings of the wise, roused the old to sensibility, and subdued the rigorous to softness.

I am one of those unhappy beings, who have been marked out as husbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have discussed all the nuptial preliminaries so often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are settled, pin-money secured, and provisions for younger children ascertained; but am at last doomed by general consent to everlasting solitude, and excluded by an irreversible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother, as a man whose visits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raises hopes only to embitter disappointment, and makes offers only to seduce girls into a waste of that part of life, in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become mistresses and mothers.

I hope you will think, that some part of this penal severity may justly be remitted, when I inform you, that I never yet professed love to a woman without sincere intentions of marriage; that I have never continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination changed, but to preserve her whom I was leaving from the shock of abruptness, or the ignominy of contempt; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportunity of seeming to discard me; and that I never forsook a mistress for larger fortune, or brighter beauty, but because I discovered some irregularity in her conduct, or some depravity in her mind; not because I was charmed by another, but because I was offended by herself.

I was very early tired of that succession of amusements by which the thoughts of most young men are dissipated, and had not long glittered in the splendour of an ample patrimony before I wished for the calm of domestick happiness. Youth is naturally delighted with sprightliness and ardour, and therefore I breathed out the sighs of my first affection at the feet of the gay, the sparkling, the vivacious Ferocula. I fancied to myself a perpetual source of happiness in wit never exhausted, and spirit

never depressed; looked with veneration on her readiness of expedients, contempt of difficulty, assurance of address, and promptitude of reply; considered her as exempt by some prerogative of nature from the weakness and timidity of female minds; and congratulated myself upon a companion superiour to all common troubles and embarrassments. I was, indeed, somewhat disturbed by the unshaken perseverance with which she enforced her demands of an unreasonable settlement; yet I should have consented to pass my life in union with her, had not my curiosity led me to a crowd gathered in the street, where I found Ferocula, in the presence of hundreds, disputing for sixpence with a chairman. I saw her in so little need of assistance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interposition, and I spared myself the shame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot some point of ceremony at our next interview, and soon provoked her to forbid me her presence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philosophy. I had frequently observed the barrenness and uniformity of connubial conversation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and discernment, when I selected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read Misothea, who declared herself the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertness, and puerile levity; and scarcely condescended to make tea, but for the linguist, the geometrician, the astronomer, or the poet. The queen of the Amazons was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in single combat; and Misothea's heart was only to bless the scholar who could overpower her by disputation. Amidst the fondest transports of courtship she could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular syllogism. You may easily imagine, that I wished this courtship at at end; but when I desired her to shorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long conversation, in which Misothea endeavoured to demonstrate the folly of attributing choice and

self-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to discover the danger of committing myself for ever to the arms of one who might at any time mistake the dictates of passion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate; or consider cuckoldom as necessary to the general system, as a link in the everlasting chain of successive causes. I therefore told her, that destiny had ordained us to part, and that nothing should have torn me from her but the talons of necessity.

I then solicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the economical Sophronia, a lady who considered wit as dangerous, and learning as superfluous, and thought that the woman who kept her house clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a sudden call, inquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of stocks once a-week, and purchased every thing at the best market, could want no accomplishments necessary to the happiness of a wise man. She discoursed with great solemnity on the care and vigilance which the superintendance of a family demands; observed how many were ruined by confidence in servants; and told me, that she never expected honesty but from a strong chest, and that the best storekeeper was the mistress's eye. Many such oracles of generosity she uttered, and made every day new improvements in her schemes for the regulation of her servants, and the distribution of her time. I was convinced that, whatever I might suffer from Sophronia, I should escape poverty; and we therefore proceeded to adjust the settlements according to her own rule, *fair and softly*. But one morning her maid came to me in tears to intreat my interest for a reconciliation with her mistress, who had turned her out at night for breaking six teeth in a tortoise-shell comb; she had attended her lady from a distant province, and having not lived long enough to save much money, was destitute among strangers, and, though of a good family, in danger of perishing in the streets, or of being compelled by hunger to prostitution. I made no scruple of promising

to restore her; but upon my first application to Sophronia, was answered with an air which called for approbation, that if she neglected her own affairs, I might suspect her of neglecting mine; that the comb stood her in three half-crowns; that no servant should wrong her twice; and that indeed she took the first opportunity of parting with Phillida, because, though she was honest, her constitution was bad, and she thought her very likely to fall sick. Of our conference I need not tell you the effect; it surely may be forgiven me, if on this occasion I forgot the decency of common forms.

From two more ladies I was disengaged by finding, that they entertained my rivals at the same time, and determined their choice by the liberality of our settlements. Another I thought myself justified in forsaking, because she gave my attorney a bribe to favour her in the bargain; another because I could never soften her to tenderness, till she heard that most of my family had died young; and another, because, to increase her fortune by expectations, she represented her sister as languishing and consumptive.

I shall in another letter give the remaining part of my history of courtship. I presume that I should hitherto have injured the majesty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit. I am, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

N° 114. SATURDAY, *April* 20, 1751.

——*Audi,*
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est.—JUV.

——When man's life is in debate,
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate.—DRYDEN.

POWER and superiority are so flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation and exposed to danger as they are, scarcely any virtue is so cautious, or any prudence so timorous, as to decline them. Even those that

have most reverence for the laws of right, are pleased with shewing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply, rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wish to pass; and, as the Roman satirist remarks, he that has no design to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the same principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the desire of investing lawful authority with terrour, and governing by force rather than persuasion. Pride is unwilling to believe the necessity of assigning any other reason than her own will; and would rather maintain the most equitable claims by violence and penalties, than descend from the dignity of command to dispute and expostulation.

It may, I think, be suspected, that this political arrogance has sometimes found its way into legislative assemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A slight perusal of the laws by which the measures of vindictive and coercive justice are established, will discover so many disproportions between crimes and punishments, such capricious distinctions of guilt, and such confusion of remissness and severity, as can scarcely be believed to have been produced by publick wisdom, sincerely and calmly studious of publick happiness.

The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, "Who knows whether this man is not less culpable than me?" On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful procession put the same question to his own heart. Few among those that crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horrour and dejection. For, who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to

the peace or prosperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are frighted into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief, and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them, not simply to punish a transgression, but to maintain order, and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with so little success, that rapine and violence are hourly increasing, yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy, and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrifick punishments; some are inclined to accelerate the executions; some to discourage pardons; and all seem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedness, and that we can only be rescued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour, and sanguinary justice.

Yet since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past times gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havock of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequences might arise from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of dreadful things the most dreadful;* an evil, beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terrour should, therefore, be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished with death, very few robbers would stain their hands in blood; but when, by the last act of cruelty, no new danger is incurred, and greater security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the sentence is often mitigated to simple robbery; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion; and, indeed, it may be observed, that all but murderers have, at their last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence, proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing, compared with his misery; and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly disables those who die upon it from infesting the community; but their death

seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates, than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave closes on his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will scarcely believe that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment: nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced, so clearly stated, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just, will always scruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that state in which there is no repentance, has conversed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compassion may incur from those who confound cruelty with firmness, I know not whether any wise man would wish it less powerful, or less extensive.

If those whom the wisdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper discipline and useful labour, have been disentangled from their habits, they might have escaped all the temptation to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in reparation and penitence; and detected they might all have been, had the prosecutors been certain that their lives would have been spared. I believe, every thief will confess, that he has been more than once seized and dismissed; and that he has sometimes ventured

upon capital crimes, because he knew, that those whom he injured would rather connive at his escape, than cloud their minds with the horrours of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectual, unless some will inform, and some will prosecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and prosecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of punishing a slight injury with death; especially when he remembers that the thief might have procured safety by another crime, from which he was restrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of publick justice are indeed strong; but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderness for life. What is punished with severity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be seldom discovered; and multitudes will be suffered to advance from crime to crime, till they deserve death, because, if they had been sooner prosecuted, they would have suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedness by lenity, is so remote from common practice, that I might reasonably fear to expose it to the publick, could it be supported only by my own observations: I shall, therefore, by ascribing it to its author, Sir Thomas More, endeavour to procure it that attention, which I wish always paid to prudence, to justice, and to mercy.

N° 115. TUESDAY, *April* 23, 1751.

Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis.—JUV.

Some faults, though small, intolerable grow.—DRYDEN.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I SIT down, in pursuance of my late engagement, to recount the remaining part of the adventures that befel me

in my long quest of conjugal felicity, which, though I have not yet been so happy as to obtain it, I have at least endeavoured to deserve by unwearied diligence, without suffering from repeated disappointments any abatement of my hope, or repression of my activity.

You must have observed in the world a species of mortals who employ themselves in promoting matrimony, and without any visible motive of interest or vanity, without any discoverable impulse of malice or benevolence, without any reason, but that they want objects of attention and topicks of conversation, are incessantly busy in procuring wives and husbands. They fill the ears of every single man and woman with some convenient match; and when they are informed of your age and fortune, offer a partner for life with the same readiness, and the same indifference, as a salesman, when he has taken measure by his eye, fits his customer with a coat.

It might be expected that they should soon be discouraged from this officious interposition by resentment or contempt; and that every man should determine the choice on which so much of his happiness must depend, by his own judgment and observation: yet it happens, that as these proposals are generally made with a shew of kindness, they seldom provoke anger, but are at worst heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are sure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect; and in more powerful and active understandings they excite curiosity, and sometimes, by a lucky chance, bring persons of similar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I was known to possess a fortune, and to want a wife; and therefore was frequently attended by these hymeneal solicitors, with whose importunity I was sometimes diverted, and sometimes perplexed; for they contended for me as vultures for a carcase; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own scheme, from the success of which he was to receive

no other advantage than the pleasure of defeating others equally eager, and equally industrious.

An invitation to sup with one of those busy friends, made me, by a concerted chance, acquainted with Camilla, by whom it was expected that I should be suddenly and irresistibly enslaved. The lady, whom the same kindness had brought without her own concurrence into the lists of love, seemed to think me at least worthy of the honour of captivity; and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with so much art and spirit, that though I had been too often deceived by appearances to devote myself irrevocably at the first interview, yet I could not suppress some raptures of admiration, and flutters of desire. I was easily persuaded to make nearer approaches; but soon discovered, that an union with Camilla was not much to be wished. Camilla professed a boundless contempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence of her own sex; and very frequently expressed her wonder that men of learning or experience could submit to trifle away life with beings incapable of solid thought. In mixed companies, she always associated with the men, and declared her satisfaction when the ladies retired. If any short excursion into the country was proposed, she commonly insisted upon the exclusion of women from the party; because, where they were admitted, the time was wasted in frothy compliments, weak indulgences, and idle ceremonies. To shew the greatness of her mind, she avoided all compliance with the fashion; and to boast the profundity of her knowledge, mistook the various textures of silk, confounded tabbies with damasks, and sent for ribands by wrong names. She despised the commerce of stated visits, a farce of empty form without instruction; and congratulated herself, that she never learned to write message cards. She often applauded the noble sentiment of Plato, who rejoiced that he was born a man rather than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of Swift's opinion, that women are only a higher species of monkies; and confessed, that when she considered the behaviour, or heard

the conversation, of her sex, she could not but forgive the Turks for suspecting them to want souls.

It was the joy and pride of Camilla to have provoked, by this insolence, all the rage of hatred, and all the persecutions of calumny; nor was she ever more elevated with her own superiority, than when she talked of female anger, and female cunning. Well, says she, has nature provided that such virulence should be disabled by folly, and such cruelty be restrained by impotence.

Camilla doubtless expected, that what she lost on one side, she should gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made such generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, instead of springing forward to meet her, shrunk back at her approach. She was persecuted by the ladies as a deserter, and at best received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amused myself awhile with her fopperies, but novelty soon gave way to detestation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the ruggedness of a man without his force, and the ignorance of a woman without her softness; nor could I think my quiet and honour to be entrusted to such audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and soliciting assault.

My next mistress was Nitella, a lady of gentle mien, and soft voice, always speaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from those with whom chance had brought her into company. In Nitella I promised myself an easy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without disturbance or altercation. I therefore soon resolved to address her, but was discouraged from prosecuting my courtship, by observing, that her apartments were superstitiously regular; and that, unless she had notice of my visit, she was never to be seen. There is a kind of anxious cleanliness which I have always noted as the characteristick of a slattern; it is the superfluous scrupulosity of guilt, dreading discovery, and shunning

suspicion: it is the violence of an effort against habit, which, being impelled by external motives, cannot stop at the middle point.

Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than elegance; and seldom could forbear to discover, by her uneasiness and constraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engrossed: I therefore concluded, that being only occasionally and ambitiously dressed, she was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are so many competitors for the fame of cleanliness, that it is not hard to gain information of those that fail, from those that desire to excel: I quickly found, that Nitella passed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, nightcap, and slippers, when she was not decorated for immediate show.

I was then led by my evil destiny to Charybdis, who never neglected an opportunity of seizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myself quickly made happy by permission to attend her to publick places; and pleased my own vanity with imagining the envy which I should raise in a thousand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of Charybdis. She soon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom which she had never seen. I solicited the happiness of accompanying her, which, after a short reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curiosity on her journey, than after all possible means of expence; and was every moment taking occasion to mention some delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon such notices to procure.

After our return, being now more familiar, she told me, whenever we met, of some new diversion; at night she had notice of a charming company that would breakfast in the gardens; and in the morning had been informed of some new song in the opera, some new dress at the playhouse, or some performer at a concert whom she longed to hear. Her intelligence was such, that there never was a show, to which did not summon me on the second day; and as

she hated a crowd, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at some intermediate hour, and pay the price of a whole company. When we passed the streets, she was often charmed with some trinket in the toyshops; and from moderate desires of seals and snuff-boxes, rose, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the smile of Charybdis too costly for a private purse, and added one more to six-and-forty lovers, whose fortune and patience her rapacity had exhausted.

Imperia then took possession of my affections; but kept them only for a short time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and having spent the early part of her life in the perusal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of Cleopatra; expected nothing less than vows, altars, and sacrifices; and thought her charms dishonoured, and her power infringed, by the softest opposition to her sentiments, or the smallest transgression of her commands. Time might indeed cure this species of pride in a mind not naturally undiscerning, and vitiated only by false representations; but the operations of time are slow; and I therefore left her to grow wise at leisure, or to continue in errour at her own expence.

Thus I have hitherto, in spite of myself, passed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dress up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the same excellence in corporeal beauty. But surely, Mr. Rambler, it is not madness to hope for some terrestrial lady unstained by the spots which I have been describing; at least I am resolved to pursue my search; for I am so far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the highest happiness decreed to our present state; and if, after all these miscarriages, I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you shall hear once more from, Yours, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

N° 116. SATURDAY, *April* 27, 1751.

Optat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus.—HOR.

Thus the slow ox would gaudy trappings claim;
The sprightly horse would plough.———FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I WAS the second son of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of London. My father having by his marriage freed the estate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his sisters their portions, thought himself discharged from all obligation to further thought, and entitled to spend the rest of his life in rural pleasures. He therefore spared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity; he procured the best guns and horses that the kingdom could supply, paid large salaries to his groom and huntsman, and became the envy of the country for the discipline of his hounds. But, above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers and setting-dogs, which by long and vigilant cultivation he had so much improved, that not a partridge or heathcock could rest in security, and game of whatever species that dared to light upon his manor, was beaten down by his shot, or covered with his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated in the chace, and, at an age when other boys are *creeping like snails unwillingly to school*, he could wind the horn, beat the bushes, bound over hedges, and swim rivers. When the huntsman one day broke his leg, he supplied his place with equal abilities, and came home with the scut in his hat, amidst the acclamations of the whole village. I being either delicate or timorous, less desirous of honour, or less capable of sylvan heroism, was always the favourite of my mother; because I kept my coat clean, and my complexion free from freckles, and did not come home, like my bro-

ther, mired and tanned, nor carry corn in my hat to the horse, nor bring dirty curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amuse herself with books, and being much inclined to despise the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, disdained to learn their sentiments or conversation, and had made no addition to the notions which she had brought from the precincts of Cornhill. She was, therefore, always recounting the glories of the city; enumerating the succession of mayors; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at Guildhall; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies' feasts by men of whom some are now made aldermen, some have fined for sheriffs, and none are worth less than forty thousand pounds. She frequently displayed her father's greatness; told of the large bills which he had paid at sight; of the sums for which his word would pass upon the Exchange; the heaps of gold which he used on Saturday night to toss about with a shovel; the extent of his warehouse, and the strength of his doors; and when she relaxed her imagination with lower subjects, described the furniture of their country-house, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By these narratives I was fired with the splendour and dignity of London, and of trade. I therefore devoted myself to a shop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with inquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholesale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother assured me that many had arrived who began the world with less than myself.

I was very impatient to enter into a path, which led to such honour and felicity; but was forced for a time to endure some repression of my eagerness, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that a *young man seldom makes much money, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty.* They thought it necessary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than

that of learning merchants' accounts, and the art of regulating books; but at length the tedious days elapsed, I was transplanted to town, and, with great satisfaction to myself, bound to a haberdasher.

My master, who had no conception of any virtue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally arise from a close and unwearied attention to the main chance; his desire to gain wealth was so well tempered by the vanity of shewing it, that without any other principle of action, he lived in the esteem of the whole commercial world; and was always treated with respect by the only men whose good opinion he valued or solicited—those who were universally allowed to be richer than himself.

By his instructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and soon caught from my fellow-apprentices the true grace of a counter-bow, the careless air with which a small pair of scales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and sprightliness with which the box, after the riband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no desire of any higher employment, and therefore applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly master of all that could be known, became a critick in small wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was sometimes consulted by the weavers when they projected fashions for the ensuing spring.

With all these accomplishments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeship, I paid a visit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and consulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a master of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But, unhappily, at the first publick table to which I was invited, appeared a student of the Temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a smile of contempt, which destroyed at once all my hopes of distinction, so that I durst hardly

raise my eyes for fear of encountering their superiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of displaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with historical narratives and political observations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of assemblies, gardens, and diversions. I, indeed, essayed to fill up a pause in a parliamentary debate with a faint mention of trade and Spaniards; and once attempted, with some warmth, to correct a gross mistake about a silver breast-knot; but neither of my antagonists seemed to think a reply necessary; they resumed their discourse without emotion, and again engrossed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear desirous to know my opinion of her dress, or to hear how long the carnation shot with white, that was then new amongst them, had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of these gentlemen had more money than myself, I could not discover what had depressed me in their presence; nor why they were considered by others as more worthy of attention and respect; and therefore resolved, when we met again, to rouse my spirit, and force myself into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a small circle very successfully with a minute representation of my lord mayor's show, when the colonel entered careless and gay, sat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not indeed with the same attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language: and by one or other the company was so happily amused, that I was neither heard nor seen, nor was able to give any other proof of my existence than that I put round the glass, and was in my turn permitted to name the toast.

My mother, indeed, endeavoured to comfort me in my

vexation, by telling me, that perhaps these showy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket need not care what any man says of him; that, if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and soldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purse; and that it is fine, when a man can set his hands to his sides, and say he is worth forty thousand pounds every day of the year. These and many more such consolations and encouragements, I received from my good mother, which, however, did not much allay my uneasiness; for having by some accident heard, that the country ladies despised her as a cit, I had therefore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but considered her as one whose ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a state of meanness and ignominy, from which I could not find any possibility of rising to the rank which my ancestors had always held.

I returned, however, to my master, and busied myself among thread, and silks, and laces, but without my former cheerfulness and alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact disposition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the glossy blackness of my shoes; nor heard with my former elevation those compliments which ladies sometimes condescended to pay me upon my readiness in twisting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of Young Man, with which I was sometimes honoured, as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent of my person, and sullen in my temper; often mistook the demands of the customers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and dismissed them with surly silence.

My master was afraid lest the shop should suffer by this change of my behaviour; and therefore, after some expostulations, posted me in the warehouse, and preserved me from the danger and reproach of desertion, to which my discontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the sixth year of my servitude my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I was now heir, and with the hearty consent of my master commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me shall be communicated in another letter, by, Sir,

Yours, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

N° 117. TUESDAY, *April* 30, 1751.

Ὄσσαν ἐπ' Οὐλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὄσσῃ
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη.—HOMER.

The gods they challenge, and affect the skies:
Heav'd on Olympus tott'ring Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood.—POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in publick life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven by a burst of laughter from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradiction, the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silk-worm's thread; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the

publick the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect: or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus or Parnassus, by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras, *ἀνεμῶν πνεόντων τὴν ἠχῶ προσκύνει*; "when the wind blows, worship its echo." This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept:

Quàm juvat immites ventos audire cubantem———
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cum fuderit auster,
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi!

How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing show'rs!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratick state of the world moving below him:

Sed nil dulcius est, bene quàm munita tenere
Edita doctrinâ sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ.

———'Tis sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
And all the magazines of learning fortified:
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind.—DRYDEN.

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established.

Causa latet; res est notissima.

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known.—ADDISON.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by the wits as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aërial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction

from common business or amusements; and some, yet more visionary, tell us, that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniencies may perhaps all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of an universal practice, there must still be presumed an universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates; but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge

decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the points most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth story, is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropicks are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniencies of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our langour by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding, till he was restored to

his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads even on the summit of the Andes, or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimprovable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Aretæus was rational in no other place but his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the publick could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which Bacon describes in Solomon's house, for the expansion and concentration of understanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower, might compose tables of interest at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps in narrative, might at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes, that we may find the heat of Virgil's climate, in some lines of his Georgick: so, when I read a composition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly said to smell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe, that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cock-loft.

HYPERTATUS.

N° 118. SATURDAY, *May* 4, 1751.

—— *Omnes illacrymabiles*
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte.—HOR.

In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown.—FRANCIS.

CICERO has, with his usual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted, in his relation of the dream of Scipio, to depreciate those honours for which he himself appears to have panted with restless solicitude, by shewing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope for from men is circumscribed.

" You see," says Africanus, pointing at the earth, from the celestial regions, " that the globe assigned to the residence and habitation of human beings is of small dimensions: how then can you obtain from the praise of men, any glory worthy of a wish? Of this little world the inhabited parts are neither numerous nor wide; even the spots where men are to be found are broken by intervening deserts, and the nations are so separated as that nothing can be transmitted from one to another. With the people of the south, by whom the opposite part of the earth is possessed, you have no intercourse; and by how small a tract do you communicate with the countries of the north? The territory which you inhabit is no more than a scanty island, inclosed by a small body of water, to which you give the name of the great sea and the Atlantick ocean. And even in this known and frequented continent, what hope can you entertain, that your renown will pass the stream of Ganges, or the cliffs of Caucasus? or by whom will your name be uttered in the extremities of the north or south, towards the rising or the setting sun? So narrow is the space to which your fame can be propagated; and even there how long will it remain?"

He then proceeds to assign natural causes why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but short in its duration; he observes the difference between the computation of time

in earth and heaven, and declares, that according to the celestial chronology, no human honours can last a single year.

Such are the objections by which Tully has made a show of discouraging the pursuit of fame; objections which sufficiently discover his tenderness and regard for his darling phantom. Homer, when the plan of his poem made the death of Patroclus necessary, resolved, at least, that he should die with honour; and therefore brought down against him the patron god of Troy, and left to Hector only the mean task of giving the last blow to an enemy whom a divine hand had disabled from resistance. Thus Tully ennobles fame, which he professes to degrade, by opposing it to celestial happiness; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by representing it small in the estimation of superiour beings. He still admits it the highest and noblest of terrestrial objects, and alleges little more against it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What might be the effect of these observations conveyed in Ciceronian eloquence to Roman understandings, cannot be determined; but few of those who shall in the present age read my humble version will find themselves much depressed in their hopes, or retarded in their designs; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us pass their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or acquisition of power, have very anxiously inquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the Ganges, or invigorated any effort by the desire of spreading their renown among the clans of Caucasus. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compass; a single nation, and a few years, have generally sufficient amplitude to fill our imaginations.

A little consideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happiness in the frequent repetition of his name, may spend his life in propagating it, without any

danger of weeping for new worlds, or necessity of passing the Atlantick sea.

The numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greatest power, or most active diligence, are inconsiderable; and where neither benefit nor mischief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curiosity; a passion, which, though in some degree universally associated to reason, is easily confined, overborne, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower classes of mankind, there will be found very little desire of any other knowledge, than what may contribute immediately to the relief of some pressing uneasiness, or the attainment of some near advantage. The Turks are said to hear with wonder a proposal to walk out, only that they may walk back; and inquire why any man should labour for nothing; so those whose condition has always restrained them to the contemplation of their own necessities, and who have been accustomed to look forward only to a small distance, will scarcely understand, why nights and days should be spent in studies, which end in new studies, and which, according to Malherbe's observations, do not tend to lessen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer easily be persuaded, that much pleasure can arise from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in distant times; or that any thing can deserve their inquiry, of which κλέος οἷον ἀκούομεν, οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any consequences.

The truth is, that very few have leisure from indispensable business, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among those to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themselves engagements, by the indulgence of some petty ambition, the admission of some insatiable desire, or the toleration of some predominant passion. The man

whose whole wish is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect interest, to estimate securities, and to engage for mortgages: the lover disdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of Corinna; and the courtier thinks the hour lost, which is not spent in promoting his interest, and facilitating his advancement. The adventures of valour, and the discoveries of science, will find a cold reception, when they are obtruded upon an attention thus busy with its favourite amusement, and impatient of interruption or disturbance.

But not only such employments as seduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promises of happiness, may restrain the mind from excursion and inquiry; curiosity may be equally destroyed by less formidable enemies; it may be dissipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The sportsman and the man of dress have their heads filled with a fox or a horse-race, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beside, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or solicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and some yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleasure or business, without joy or sorrow, nor ever rouse from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of those who have dedicated themselves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curiosity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame, but that which their own studies entitle them to partake. The naturalist has no desire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer as a being unworthy of his regard: the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiasts all those who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the valleys of life no voice but that

of necessity; all those who imagine themselves too important to regard him, and consider the mention of his name as an usurpation of their time; all who are too much or too little pleased with themselves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleasure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different pursuits; and all who slumber in universal negligence; he will find his renown straitened by nearer bounds than the rocks of Caucasus, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a small part of his fellow-creatures.

That we may not languish in our endeavours after excellence, it is necessary, that, as Africanus counsels his descendant, "we raise our eyes to higher prospects, and contemplate our future and eternal state, without giving up our hearts to the praise of crowds, or fixing our hopes on such rewards as human power can bestow."

N° 119. Tuesday, *May* 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra.—Hor.

Faults lay on either side the Trojan tow'rs.—Elphinston.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As, notwithstanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence will be able to suggest, men and women must at last pass their lives together, I have never therefore thought those writers friends to human happiness, who endeavour to excite in either sex a general contempt or suspicion of the other. To persuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a suitable associate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous; that they who trust are certainly betrayed, and they who esteem are always disappointed; is not to awaken judgment, but to inflame temerity. Without hope there can be no caution. Those who are convinced, that no reason for prefer-

ence can be found, will never harass their thoughts with doubt and deliberation; they will resolve, since they are doomed to misery, that no needless anxiety shall disturb their quiet; they will plunge at hazard into the crowd, and snatch the first hand that shall be held toward them.

That the world is overrun with vice, cannot be denied; but vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally escape a greater evil by suffering a less; and therefore, those who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the knowledge of life, should be careful to inculcate the possibility of virtue and happiness, and to encourage endeavours by prospects of success.

You, perhaps, do not suspect, that these are the sentiments of one who has been subject for many years to all the hardships of antiquated virginity; has been long accustomed to the coldness of neglect, and the petulance of insult; has been mortified in full assemblies by inquiries after forgotten fashions, games long disused, and wits and beauties of ancient renown; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the second wedding of many acquaintances; has been ridiculed by two generations of coquets in whispers intended to be heard; and been long considered by the airy and gay, as too venerable for familiarity, and too wise for pleasure. It is indeed natural for injury to provoke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual asperity; yet I have hitherto struggled with so much vigilance against my pride and my resentment, that I have preserved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any part of my employment to collect sentences against marriage; nor am inclined to lessen the number of the few friends whom time has left me, by obstructing that happiness which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in censures of the forwardness and indiscretion of girls, or the inconstancy, tastelessness, and perfidy of men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition to

which we are not condemned by necessity, but induced by observation and choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the malignity with which a reproach, edged with the appellation of old maid, swells some of those hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to solitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor passed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtship, and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gaiety amidst the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applause; been attended from pleasure to pleasure by the great, the sprightly, and the vain; and seen my regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a stranger to nuptial happiness, I suffer only the consequences of my own resolves, and can look back upon the succession of lovers, whose addresses I have rejected, without grief, and without malice.

When my name first began to be inscribed upon glasses, I was honoured with the amorous professions of the gay Venustulus, a gentleman, who, being the only son of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonness of expence, and softness of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his person, and easy in his address, and, therefore, soon gained upon my eye at an age when the sight is very little overruled by the understanding. He had not any power in himself of gladdening or amusing; but supplied his want of conversation by treats and diversions; and his chief art of courtship was to fill the mind of his mistress with parties, rambles, musick, and shows. We were often engaged in short excursions to gardens and seats, and I was for awhile pleased with the care which Venustulus discovered in securing me from any appearance of danger, or possibility of mischance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promise the waterman a reward if he landed us safe; and always contrived to return by day-light for fear of robbers. This extraordinary solicitude was represented for a time as the effect of his tenderness for me; but fear is too

strong for continued hypocrisy. I soon discovered, that Venustulus had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrours, and he could scarcely refrain from screams and outcries at any accidental surprize. He durst not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainscot, nor cross a field where the cattle were frisking in the sunshine; the least breeze that waved upon the river was a storm, and every clamour in the street was a cry of fire. I have seen him lose his colour when my squirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the sudden entrance of a black cat. Compassion once obliged me to drive away with my fan, a beetle that kept him in distress, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own escape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a husband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refusing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unnecessary fears, and flown to me for that succour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was Fungoso, the son of a stock-jobber, whose visits my friends, by the importunity of persuasion, prevailed upon me to allow. Fungoso was no very suitable companion; for having been bred in a counting-house, he spoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no desire of any reputation but that of an acute prognosticator of the changes in the funds; nor had any means of raising merriment, but by telling how somebody was overreached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great sobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haste to conclude the match, but was so much awed by my parents, that I durst not dismiss him, and might perhaps have been doomed for ever to the grossness of pedlary, and the jargon of usury, had not a fraud been discovered in the settlement, which set me free from the persecution of grovelling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

I was, afterwards, six months without any particular notice, but at last became the idol of the glittering Flosculus, who prescribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied at pleasure the cock of every hat, and the sleeve of every coat that appeared in fashionable assemblies. Flosculus made some impression upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion; he commended my skill in dress, my judgment in suiting colours, and my art in disposing ornaments. But Flosculus was too much engaged by his own elegance, to be sufficiently attentive to the duties of a lover, or to please with varied praise an ear made delicate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and staid away three days, because I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found, that Flosculus was rather a rival than an admirer; and that we should probably live in a perpetual struggle of emulous finery, and spend our lives in stratagems to be first in the fashion.

I had soon after the honour at a feast of attracting the eyes of Dentatus, one of those human beings whose only happiness is to dine. Dentatus regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of measures that he had laid for procuring the best cook in France, and entertained me with bills of fare, prescribed the arrangement of dishes, and taught me two sauces invented by himself. At length, such is the uncertainty of human happiness, I declared my opinion too hastily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew so cold and negligent, that he was easily dismissed.

Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the honour to lead awhile in triumph. But two of them I drove from me, by discovering that they had no taste or knowledge in musick; three I dismissed, because they were drunkards; two, because they paid their addresses at the same time to other ladies; and six, because they attempted to influence my choice by bribing my maid. Two more I discarded at the second visit for obscene allusions;

and five for drollery on religion. In the latter part of my reign, I sentenced two to perpetual exile, for offering me settlements, by which the children of a former marriage would have been injured; four, for representing falsely the value of their estates; three for concealing their debts; and one, for raising the rent of a decrepit tenant.

I have now sent you a narrative, which the ladies may oppose to the tale of Hymenæus. I mean not to depreciate the sex which has produced poets and philosophers, heroes and martyrs; but will not suffer the rising generation of beauties to be dejected by partial satire; or to imagine that those who censured them have not likewise their follies, and their vices. I do not yet believe happiness unattainable in marriage, though I have never yet been able to find a man, with whom I could prudently venture an inseparable union. It is necessary to expose faults, that their deformity may be seen; but the reproach ought not to be extended beyond the crime, nor either sex to be contemned, because some women, or men, are indelicate or dishonest. I am, &c.

TRANQUILLA.

N° 120. SATURDAY, *May* 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri solio Phraaten,
Dissidens plebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus, populumque falsis
Dedocet uti
Vocibus.——HOR.

True virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe profest,
Disdains to number with the blest
Phraates, by his slaves ador'd,
And to the Parthian crown restor'd.—FRANCIS.

IN the reign of Jenghiz Can, conquerour of the east, in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of India, for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His

warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages; the sea was covered with his ships; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to Nouradin.

At length Nouradin felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages of physick; they filled his apartments with alexipharmicks, restoratives, and essential virtues; the pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new spirits to his nerves, and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his physicians, and rarely visited by his friends; but his unwillingness to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having passed the night in tedious languor, he called to him Almamoulin, his only son, and dismissing his attendants, "My son," says he, "behold here the weakness and fragility of man; look backward a few days, thy father was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, and strong as the cedar of the mountain; the nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted in his shade. Malevolence beheld me, and sighed: His root, she cried, is fixed in the depths; it is watered by the fountains of Oxus; it sends out branches afar, and bids defiance to the blast; prudence reclines against his trunk, and prosperity dances on his top. Now, Almamoulin, look upon me withering and prostrate; look upon me, and attend. I have trafficked, I have prospered, I have rioted

in gain; my house is splendid, my servants are numerous; yet I displayed only a small part of my riches; the rest, which I was hindered from enjoying by the fear of raising envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in towers, I have buried in caverns, I have hidden in secret repositories, which this scroll will discover. My purpose was, after ten months more spent in commerce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a safer country; to have given seven years to delight and festivity, and the remaining part of my days to solitude and repentance; but th hand of death is upon me; a frigorifick torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am now leaving the produce of my toil, which it must be thy business to enjoy with wisdom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with such grief, that he fell into convulsions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched awhile with honest sorrow, and sat two hours in profound meditation, without perusing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborne with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new possessions, which swelled his heart with such transports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence, suitable at once to the rank of Nouradin's profession, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treasures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expences of other young men: he therefore believed, that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want. He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on

the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself, by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but the princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion and disdained him: How, says she, dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great.

He then contracted his desires to more private and domestick pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a time; but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He therefore returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of

pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness; every hour was crowded with pleasure; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. Almamoulin cried out, "I have at last found the use of riches; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity, and the safety of an obscure station. What trouble can he feel, whom all are studious to please, that they may be repaid with pleasure? What danger can he dread, to whom every man is a friend?"

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly, regaling at his expence; but in the midst of this soliloquy, an officer of justice entered the house, and in the form of legal citation, summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood awhile aghast, then stole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation; yet, unpatronized and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who, after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. "Brother," said the philosopher, "thou hast suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes, and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hadst taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature

designed them, and to expect from them, what experience has now taught thee, that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayest be convinced, by considering at how dear a price they tempted thee, upon thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain, who stood trembling at Astracan, before a being not naturally superiour to himself. That they will not supply unexhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces, and neglected gardens, will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover, when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanced and alone. Yet think not riches useless; there are purposes to which a wise man may be delighted to apply them; they may, by a rational distribution to those who want them, ease the pains of helpless disease, still the throbs of restless anxiety, relieve innocence from oppression, and raise imbecility to cheerfulness and vigour. This they will enable thee to perform, and this will afford the only happiness ordained for our present state, the confidence of Divine favour, and the hope of future rewards."

END OF VOL. I.

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